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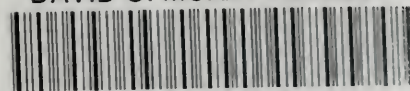


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JAMES WHALEY WEBSTER



J. W. Webster  
1930

# JAMES WHALEY WEBSTER

UPPER SNAKE RIVER VALLEY PIONEER

*By*

DAVID L. CROWDER

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Dedicated to  
Lola Merrill Webster  
who provided the impetus for this study  
and  
to my wife  
Jo Anne  
and  
my children  
Linda Anne, Carolyn, Rebecca, Ethan,  
Heather and Johnathan  
who provide unfailing support



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## Preface

TO study James Whaley Webster is to study life on the Idaho frontier. He grew to maturity in an environment which demanded much. Either a man could be beaten by the situations he faced, or he could respond with fortitude and develop a character devoid of cowardice. Jim never allowed his environment to overwhelm him. Rather, he created the environment in which he chose to function, and, in the process, improved the quality of life of those around him. To him life was more than existing. It was his opportunity to expand, to improve, to nurture, to create. He left things better than he found them. May we all do likewise!

The first two chapters of this study develop background information on Jim's parents and his wife Mary's parents. This allows them to be viewed in the perspective of their pioneer antecedents and sets the stage for future developments. The other nine chapters deal with the many facets of Jim's life and his contribution to Idaho history.



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## Preface

MANY thanks to Dr. David L. Crowder for writing this fine history of J. W. Webster. For many years this project has been planned and discussed, but until I contacted Dr. Crowder, it would never have been completed. As Dr. Crowder handed me the completed manuscript, he said that he felt like a member of the family, having lived with the Webster history for the past two years, and how he was sorry that it was over as he had learned to greatly respect J. W. Webster.

When I came into the family, J. W. was called Grandfather and Mary Jane, his wife, was Grandmother to everyone. They became an important part of my life, I had lost my own father in 1915, so I appreciated their kindnesses to me. Then after Grandfather's death in 1941, Grandmother and I became very close. At her death, she gave Kenneth and me her family papers, the original documents mentioned in this book as well as others, and told us to take care of them. Now they are to be placed in the historical department of the L. D. S. Church where they will be available to everyone. Copies of them will be placed in the Ricks College Library to be more available to family and friends in this valley.

Lola M. Webster  
Daughter-in-law to  
J. W. Webster

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JAMES WHALEY WEBSTER



## William Lott Webster

**F**AITHFULNESS and integrity were the hallmarks of William Lott Webster's life. He was a pioneer who enjoyed the challenges of life and fully measured up to them. As a church leader, merchant, and legislator, he contributed substantially to Idaho history and set an example for his children to follow.

William began his life on October 31, 1834, in Sandy Lane Bottom, Yorkshire, England. He was the son of Ann Webster and William Milner Naylor. Ann was to marry William Naylor on December 19, 1835, but William was raised by his maternal grandparents and retained the Webster surname.<sup>1</sup>

William's grandparents did not have the means to see that he got much schooling. It was customary in those days in England for children to begin working outside the home at an early age. Accordingly, William worked for a time combing wool and in a factory spinning wool. At age fourteen he was apprenticed to Samuel Wilkenson who made, and sold, boots and shoes in Clayton, Yorkshire, England. Traditionally, the period of apprenticeship lasted for seven years. The master was responsible to house, clothe and feed the apprentice. After the apprentice attained some degree of competence, he could be paid a small sum from the profits of the business. William was a capable person and was allowed to end his apprenticeship after six years and eight months. Whereupon



he was hired by Wilkenson to continue at full pay. He worked for Wilkenson about a year and a half.<sup>2</sup>

In 1854, William came into contact with the missionaries of the Mormon Church. His investigation of the church lasted about one year before he accepted its tenents and sought baptism. He was almost twenty-one when he was baptized on April 29, 1855. The ordinance was performed by Elder George Robinson.<sup>3</sup> Presumably he was confirmed at the same time.

William continued to work for Wilkenson but he devoted great energy to his new church. He actively proselyted with his brethren for the next two years. He worked especially hard among his relatives. He noted in his diary: " 'I . . . visited my relatives and endeavored to convert them to Mormonism but failed. My mother was favorable to the truth but died out of the church.' " <sup>4</sup> He was disappointed but his faith was unshaken.

During the period of time that William was teaching about the church, he took the opportunity to visit a young lady he had met some time before. Her name was Emma Whaley, the daughter of James and Mary Greenwood Whaley. She had been born September 19, 1834, at Clayton, Yorkshire, England. William taught her about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and she was converted. Her parents objected when she joined the Mormon Church, and they turned her out of the family home and virtually disowned her. The only communication she had with her family in the following years was an "occasional letter edged in black informing her of the death of some member of her family."<sup>5</sup>

William and Emma evidently talked about marriage, but first they decided to join the Saints in



America. They did not have enough money for both to emigrate so they decided to pool their resources, borrow what they could, and send William first. He would get a job, save his money, then send for Emma. With money borrowed from Emma and a friend, Mary Varley, William was set to depart. He and Emma left Clayton on March 25, 1857. They stopped in Bradford and stayed with William's mother. The next morning he took leave of his sweetheart and his mother. He was never to see his mother again. He traveled by train to Liverpool, where he had booked passage on the *George Washington*, due to leave that day. When the ship arrived in Boston Harbor on April 21, 1857, William found himself "in a strange land and among strangers." To add to his problems, he had very little money. He soon found employment in Dorchester, about three miles southeast of Boston.<sup>6</sup> He worked for William Wilson, formerly of London,<sup>7</sup> making shoes and boots. Soon he was the foreman of the shop, a position he maintained for six months. Then he went into partnership with James Slack and they opened a boot and shoe business at No. 44 Meridian Street-East, Boston. The partnership was dissolved about six months later when Slack became dissatisfied and withdrew. William found himself the sole proprietor of the business.<sup>8</sup>

William saved his money and sent it to Emma, first to pay Mary Varley back, and then to use the remainder to come to America. The money arrived too late for Emma to join the Saints emigrating in 1858, so she had to wait a year for the next group.<sup>9</sup> This must have been a keen disappointment to her. She was estranged from her family and separated from her sweetheart. But her courage did not wane.

When the next group of Saints left England in April, 1859, Emma was with them. She arrived in Boston, May 13, 1859, and was met by William. One month later they were united in marriage. The president of the Boston branch, Elder John Eardley, performed the ceremony in the home of John Lewis.<sup>10</sup>

William continued to operate the shoe and boot business for another year. But he and Emma had no intention of staying in Boston. Continuing the business was simply a means to acquire the necessary capital to emigrate to Utah Territory. They left Boston early in May, 1860, and subsequently joined an independent company under the leadership of Jesse Murphy, leaving from Florence, Nebraska.<sup>11</sup>

The journey from Florence to Salt Lake City took about eighty-five days, from June 6 to about the first of September. They experienced many of the vicissitudes of most of the pioneers. Ordinarily the trip was made by walking. However, William was appointed to scout and was provided with a horse. His responsibility was to find camping places where water and feed was available.<sup>12</sup> Undoubtedly he was also to be on the lookout for Indians. He must have fulfilled his responsibilities well, as the company apparently had little difficulty on the journey finding favorable camping spots.

Emma, along with the other women of the company, would help set up camp and prepare the meals. They soon learned what their predecessors had learned — there was little on the Great Plains with which to make a fire. They had to gather buffalo chips to burn. Their aprons served to collect the fuel. Like other pioneers, they accommodated themselves to exisiting conditions. The monotony of the journey

was broken by singing and dancing in the evening around the campfire.<sup>13</sup>

Emma was young and strong and walked the entire way from Florence to Salt Lake City, with the exception of one day when she was ill and rode in a wagon.<sup>14</sup> This would not have been unusual except that she was pregnant.

Shortly after the company reached Salt Lake City, William began using his skill as a shoe and boot maker. At first he joined T. B. Broderick in the business. That partnership dissolved, and William became involved with a Mr. Riser. That did not work out either, so he started making and selling boots and shoes by himself.<sup>15</sup>

On January 11, 1861, the first child of William and Emma, William Moroni, was born. The family stayed in Salt Lake City until late in 1862, when they joined the pioneers in the frontier town of Franklin.<sup>16</sup> They established themselves on the north side of the "Old Fort,"<sup>17</sup> between George Foster and Preston Thomas.<sup>18</sup>

Immediately William began a shoe and boot manufacturing business and included shoe repair.<sup>19</sup> The business prospered and by 1875, he was ready to expand. He added harness making, a crucial industry on the frontier. Two years later he further expanded by buying general merchandise on credit and retailing the stock.<sup>20</sup> A sign painted on the front of the store announced: "Webster Groceries and General Outfitting." In later years the building was used as a coffee house and saloon.<sup>21</sup>

William and Emma added five children to their family in Franklin: James Whaley, November 29, 1862; Mary Ann, September 23, 1864; Samuel John, August 21, 1866; Alfred Whaley, December 26, 1867;



and George Whaley, December 16, 1871. All grew to maturity in Franklin except George Whaley who died June 6, 1879. Emma taught the children to be polite, considerate, and thrifty. They learned at an early age the value and necessity of hard work. Emma was an "excellent homemaker — neat and tidy — a fine seamstress and an exceptionally good cook. She made hairpieces and switches from hair combings. She also did beautiful shadow embroidery on aprons and undergarments."<sup>22</sup>

The building of the Utah & Northern Railroad was a boon to William's business. The Utah Northern Railroad had been organized on August 23, 1871, with John W. Young, son of President Brigham Young, president and superintendent. The railroad was to be built from Brigham City to Ogden and simultaneously from Ogden to Franklin. By June 13, 1873, daily service was established between Ogden and Franklin on the narrow gauge line.<sup>23</sup> Ultimately the railroad was to be built to the Montana mining fields. Financial reverses led to the selling of the railroad to eastern financiers. The railroad was reorganized as the Utah & Northern in January, 1877. In 1878, the company began building north from Franklin.<sup>24</sup> William moved his mercantile business along with the advancing railroad construction. He first located at Oneida (now Arimo). In 1879, he moved to Eagle Rock, <sup>25</sup> where he did especially well selling his goods. He then followed the construction on to Beaver Canyon. This area was called the "'tie yourself down'" stretch because of the rough winding route.<sup>26</sup> All along the route William had cultivated many friendships and established a good commercial reputation. In the fall of 1879, he returned to his home and business in Franklin.<sup>27</sup>

By 1882, William had prospered to the point where he could substantially expand his business. He built a store out of rock. It was thirty by sixty feet and was two stories over a basement. The main floor served as the store where "they sold everything from the cradle to the grave." The second floor was used as a community center. Dances and other entertainment were held there. The cost of the structure was five thousand dollars.<sup>28</sup>

By 1885, William had about thirteen thousand dollars worth of goods in his store. Additionally, his buildings, and some grain he had bought, were worth about twelve thousand dollars. Considering the fact that he had started out in 1877 with about eight hundred dollars worth of farming implements and about two hundred dollars worth of dry goods, all bought on credit from Howard Subine, his business had certainly been well managed.<sup>29</sup>

In 1882, as the store was being constructed, an eight-room house was also being constructed for the family. It was also built of rock and was located across the street from the store. Traveling salesman, stopping in town, could get a room in the building as part of it was used as a hotel. Emma was the proprietor.<sup>30</sup>

William continued as an independent businessman until 1889, although he had included his sons in the business by that time. He was considered one of the leading Cache Valley merchants. He "stood the test of severe competition, for Franklin Co-op, as managed by 'Samie Parkinson' . . . [was] no mean competitor."<sup>31</sup> In 1899, the stores in Franklin were consolidated into a cooperative named the Oneida Mercantile Union. The W. L. Webster & Sons store was included,<sup>32</sup> "Mr. Webster sacrificing his own

business to perfect the union.”<sup>33</sup> The consolidation took place on May 5, 1889.<sup>34</sup>

Merchandizing was not William's only interest. He became involved in local and state government. He served as a Justice of the Peace and, at the same time, was city marshal during the early days of Franklin.<sup>35</sup> Early in 1880, he was asked to run for the Idaho Territorial Legislature. He agreed and was elected. He took his seat in the House of Representatives when the Eleventh Legislature convened in Boise City on December 13, 1880. The session lasted until February 10, 1881.<sup>36</sup> This was the first session that, by law, could last up to sixty days. The national Congress had passed an act to extend the time period from forty to sixty days so more time could be given to deliberate the bills concerning the industries and institutions of the rapidly growing territory.<sup>37</sup> The 1880 census showed 32,610 people in the territory, almost doubling the 1870 census.<sup>38</sup> The important legislation passed by the House and Council and signed by Governor John B. Neil included a revision of the Code of Civil Procedure, tax reduction, regulation of the sale and smoking of opium and regulation of irrigation water.<sup>39</sup>

William was returned to the Legislature for the Twelfth Session. It convened on December 11, 1882, and adjourned February 8, 1883. This time William took his seat as a member of the Council.<sup>40</sup> Important matters passed by this session included an election law to prevent election frauds, a territory-wide public school system, and the taxes were again reduced.<sup>41</sup>

In both the Eleventh and Twelfth sessions William assisted in the passage of the important legislation. He made many friends in Boise and gained the



respect of his political opponents for his forthrightness. He spoke out courageously and forcefully in defense of his co-religionists and constituents as a vigorous anti-Mormon movement was underway. It was to result in the harrassment of those few polygamists in the Mormon population of the territory, as well as the loss of civil rights of all members of the Church.<sup>42</sup> Federal anti-polygamy laws were passed and enforced. William often sheltered polygamists who were trying to stay out of the reach of the U.S. Marshals.<sup>43</sup>

William and Emma devoted much personal energy and physical resources to church service. Emma spent many years working in the Relief Society and exemplified the philosophy of that organization. William was called to the High Council when the Oneida Stake was created in 1884. At the same time he was set apart as the superintendent of the Stake Sunday School. He served honorably in that position until his death. William hired a man to drive his team and wagon to haul stone for the construction of the Logan Temple. He and Emma and their children donated considerable time and money to help build the Temple. They also supported their son William Moroni on a mission to the southern states in 1884. William sacrificed another possible opportunity to serve in the Territorial Council to stay in Franklin and run the business while his son was a missionary. He had been nominated to run for a third term in the Territorial Legislature.<sup>44</sup>

William, who had spent much of his life around horses, was accidently kicked in the stomach by one on March 24, 1897. He was badly hurt, but was able to walk home. He appeared to recover, but a week later he began to experience stomach cramps which



grew progressively worse. He died at his home on April 7, at age 62.<sup>45</sup>

Many stake dignitaries as well as family and friends attended the funeral services. On the stand where William "usually sat, was placed his vacant chair draped in white, with his portrait surrounded with a wreath of flowers. On top a card, decorated with flowers, bore the inscription, 'vacant' "<sup>46</sup>

Emma survived her husband by twelve years. She was well cared for by her children. She was seventy-five years of age when a stroke partially paralyzed her. She died November 4, 1909. She was survived by five children, twenty-three grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.<sup>47</sup>

William and Emma provided their descendents with a tie to an historical past that called forth those who chose to overcome considerable heartache and hardship to follow the dictates of their consciences. This took courage and perseverance and, above all, faith that even if the immediate prospect was not encouraging, the eternal prospect was.

## Thomas Sharratt Smart

THOMAS Sharratt Smart was a man of unusual character. His devotion to his church, his love for his family, and his pride in his community, state and nation were integral parts of that character.

Thomas was born September 14, 1823, at Stonewall, Shenstone Parish, Staffordshire, England. He was the son of William Smart and Marie Sharratt.<sup>1</sup> His paternal grandparents were James and Jane Smart. The family Coat of Arms was the "burdock leaf, accompanied by the Lyon and Unicorn, the emblem of England."<sup>2</sup>

Thomas had three brothers and five sisters. He was the second son. The family was raised in a religious atmosphere. This greatly influenced Thomas who was a prayerful individual all his life.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas became a brickmaker, working with his brother, James. When he was seventeen years of age he moved to Normandy, France. He lived there for six years, much in demand for his skill at brickmaking.<sup>4</sup>

Thomas met and fell in love with Ann Hayter of Portsmouth, England. She had been married to Harry Fleet. They were the parents of three daughters: Mary Ann, Alice and Louisa. Harry treated his family badly and he and Ann were divorced.<sup>5</sup> Ann and Thomas were married in England.<sup>6</sup> They were to become the parents of seven children: Charlotte, Marie,

Thomas, Sarah Ann, Eliza, William Henry, and Mary Jane.<sup>7</sup> The three girls from Ann's first marriage were sealed to Thomas and Ann in the Salt Lake Endowment House, along with Charlotte, who had been born before they joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The sealing of Thomas and Ann took place in the Endowment House on June 3, 1856.<sup>8</sup>

Ann Hayter had been born at Portsmouth, Hampshire, England, September 18, 1822. She was the daughter of Henry Hayter and Keziah Dennison.<sup>9</sup> Henry and Keziah had both been born and raised in Portsmouth. Ann was "of a swarthy, dark complexion, and her hair was almost raven black and well kept and shiny." As a young woman she "was slender but well knit, sinuous, and enduring." She "walked with upright carriage and with a light, lithe step."<sup>10</sup>

The year 1845, was a momentous one for Thomas and his young family. They emigrated to the new world. They were undoubtedly filled with the spirit of adventure and sure of success in the "Land of Promise." The rough accommodations on the ship for those hardy emigrants did not shake their enthusiasm. After eight weeks in transit they arrived in America. They made their way to St. Louis, a bustling frontier town. There Thomas became involved in brickmaking, leather manufacturing and farming.<sup>11</sup>

Thomas soon established his reputation as a master brickmaker. He entered into an agreement with Freeman Waters, and Skelton Richardson of Little Rick, Jefferson County, Missouri, to make eighty thousand "good merchantable brick." He was to dig the clay and set and burn the brick on the Waters and Richardson land. He was to be paid thirty dollars per month for labor plus twenty cents per thousand for



the brick. He was to be paid weekly for his labor, however, he would only receive one-half of the money. The other half would be paid upon completion of the project. Waters and Richarson agreed to supply all the needed materials plus three men to help. Thomas had to supply his own food out of his wages. He commenced working on July 1, 1848, and continued until the eighty thousand bricks were made.<sup>12</sup>

A one year agreement to lease a tract of land to do some farming was to lead to a major turning point in the life of the Smart Family. The agreement was drawn up on March 23, 1850, and was to be in effect until March 23, 1851. The farm was leased from Mrs. Irene M. Morrison. It was situated about nine miles from St. Louis. The agreement included the use of Mrs. Morrison's "horse and waggon, one cow and calf, poultry, etc." Thomas was to keep half the increase of the livestock. He was to "cultivate the farm and garden," and sell the produce. The proceeds were to be equally divided between Thomas and Mrs. Morrison. Additionally Thomas was to keep the buildings, fences and land in good order. Mrs. Morrison was to have the use of some of the buildings and the horse and wagon when it was not being used by Thomas. Thomas had to pledge the following security: "Two oxen, one red and the other yellow spotted, both three years old; two horses, a mare & horse, one six years old and the other two years old." If, in the opinion of Mrs. Morrison, or her agent, Thomas Rector, the lease agreement was broken by Thomas, he would forfeit his security.<sup>13</sup>

To help with the farm work, Thomas hired several men. One was Henry Gale. Gale created some suspicion as he would leave the farm in the evening

and head into the woods. Curiosity got the best of Thomas and he queried Gale about his activities. Gale admitted that he was attending a meeting of some Mormons in a nearby log house. Thomas was a religious man, but he had not joined any of the frontier churches in St. Louis. He began asking Gale questions and was taught about the First Principles of the Gospel as well as the Apostasy and the Restoration. He became convinced that the tenents of the Mormon Church were true and sought baptism. Before he was baptized, he taught his wife, with the aid of the Elders. She was converted and they were baptized and confirmed members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the summer of 1851. Thomas was baptized by John A. Richards and Ann by Samuel O Bray.<sup>14</sup>

Responding to a manifesto issued by Brigham Young for the Saints "to emigrate . . . to the body of the Church,"<sup>15</sup> Thomas and his family, in the spring of 1852, decided to leave St. Louis and trek west to the recently created Utah Territory.<sup>16</sup> Thomas was chosen captain of a wagon train of seventeen wagons and twenty families. They left St. Louis on April 8, 1852. They encountered many of the usual difficulties of the trail, including an epidemic of cholera. No lives were lost during the arduous journey.<sup>17</sup> The trek ended in Salt Lake City on September 4, 1852.<sup>18</sup> Bishop Shadrack Roundy met and cared for them.<sup>19</sup>

Thomas and his family first settled in American Fork. He was to supervise the construction of the dirt walls which served to enclose the tiny settlement. While in American Fork, Thomas was ordained an Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood by Claud Roger.<sup>20</sup>

Thomas moved his family to Provo in 1856, re-

sponding to a request of the presiding brethren in Provo to assume control of a tannery and shoe shop which was not being run successfully and was in debt. Thomas took over the management of the business and cleared the debt within one year.<sup>21</sup> He also invested five hundred dollars of his own money in the tannery, which helped pay off the debt. This investment, along with other real and personal property was to be conveyed to the Church:

Be it known by these presents, that I, Thomas Smart of the City of Provo, in the county of Utah, and the Territory of Utah, for and in consideration of the good will which I have to the CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS, give and convey unto Brigham Young, Trustee in Trust for said Church, his successors in office, and assign, all my claim to, and ownership of the following described property, to wit:

Ten acres of land in the American Creek survey of farming land, value, \$50.00

Five acres of land in the above survey lot, value, \$20.00

Twenty acres in the Provo survey of farming land, value, \$130.00

Six acres in the American Creek ward pasture, value, \$6.00

One share in an upper room at Salt Lake City, value, \$8.00

One yoke of oxen, value, \$80.00

Three cows, value, \$90.00

One two year old heifer, value, \$12.00

Three calves, value, \$20.00

Twenty sheep, value, \$100.00

An undivided third of a thrashing machine, value, \$150.00

An interest in a tannery at Provo, value \$500.00

One Waggon, value, \$20.00

One plough, value, \$8.00

Household furniture, value, \$50.00

One thousand two hundred and twenty four dollars<sup>22</sup> together with all the rights, privileges, and appurtenances, thereunto belonging or appertaining: I also covenant and agree, that I am the lawful claimant and owner of said property, and will warrant and forever defend the same, unto the TRUSTEE IN



TRUST, his successors in office, and assigns, against the claims of my heirs, assigns, and or any person whomsoever.

Witnessed by John T. Filcher and Thomas Barrett, and certified by Thomas J. Filcher, J.P.<sup>23</sup>

While in Provo, "Thomas S. Smart was ordained one of the Seventy Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Daniel Allen on the 17th day of May, A.D. 1857."<sup>24</sup>

Another turning point in the life of Thomas and his family came in 1860. This was a period of rapid expansion of the Mormon frontier. A colonizing expedition was organized, on the advice of Brigham Young, to settle on the " 'Muddy' now Cub River in northeastern part of Cache Valley."<sup>25</sup> Thomas was chosen the leader of a group called to colonize the area. Samuel Rose Parkinson and James Sanderson were his assistants. Thomas "had been told . . . that if he could induce 50 families to go there they could make a settlement." He "induced 75 families to go there and make the town."<sup>26</sup> Part of the group arrived on Spring Creek on the morning of April 14. The river was high and a bridge had to be built to cross. When the bridge was completed, "a band of Indians led by Chief Kitemare blocked their way." They had to explain their peaceful intentions and were allowed to pass. They crossed the river and soon stopped at the site of the future Franklin, Idaho.<sup>27</sup> The rest of the settlers, including the Smart family arrived on the fifteenth of April.<sup>28</sup>

Peter Maughan, presiding Bishop of Cache Valley, instructed Smart, Parkinson, and Sanderson to take charge of the temporal and spiritual welfare of the colonists.<sup>29</sup> A branch was organized with Thomas as President to run the spiritual affairs.<sup>30</sup> The first order of temporal business was to apportion the land



so houses could be built on specified lots. Accordingly the three "went to work" and surveyed the land and "drew lots for it."<sup>31</sup>

The men had no compass to run the survey so they ran the lines by sighting on the North Star.<sup>32</sup> Each building lot was numbered and corresponding numbers were placed in a hat. Each adult male was entitled to one lot. The lots were one and one quarter acre each. Additionally, ten acre fields were acquired by lot. Grazing land was held in common.<sup>33</sup> The lottery took place on April 19, 1860.<sup>34</sup> One of the first buildings erected was a twenty by forty foot log schoolhouse.<sup>35</sup>

At first the settlement was called the "Old Fort" as the buildings were arranged in a square for protection purposes. President Brigham Young visited in July, 1860, and suggested the name be changed from Old Fort to Franklin, honoring Franklin D. Richards of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.<sup>36</sup> The change was made. Franklin was included as part of the Idaho Territory in 1863, much to the chagrin of its citizens, and incorporated in 1868.

Thomas was soon integrally involved in every facet of the community. He served as a school trustee for several years beginning in 1865,<sup>37</sup> as a juror several times, and was often chosen as an arbitrator to help settle disputes.<sup>38</sup> In addition to helping plan the settlement, he directed the building of the first irrigation project in Southern Idaho.<sup>39</sup> "He assisted in building roads, bridges, canals, houses for school and worship."<sup>40</sup> He, along with his friend Samuel R. Parkinson, built a sawmill using water power in 1863. This greatly "increased the production of dimensional lumber."<sup>41</sup> The material to construct the mill came over the route from Fort Benton.<sup>42</sup> The mill

operated until 1867,<sup>43</sup> when it was replaced by a steam powered mill in Maple Creek Canyon. This mill provided ties for Utah railroads as well as lumber "used in the Salt Lake Tabernacle and the Salt Lake and Logan Temples."<sup>44</sup>

Through hard work, thrift, and foresight, Thomas acquired several pieces of land. He bought fourteen acres in Preston from Joseph and Alice Young for five hundred dollars in 1885.<sup>45</sup> In 1891, he bought one hundred and fifty-nine acres from John and Candice Taylor for two hundred dollars.<sup>46</sup> Late in 1893, he purchased one hundred sixty acres for five hundred dollars from William and Maria Taylor. This land joined that purchased in 1891.<sup>47</sup> He assumed a homestead relinquished by Ham Wheeler on Worm Creek, later known as Glendale, near Preston. He built a house there, but later sold it to Dave Miles, who sold it to the Webster brothers.<sup>48</sup> Additionally, he acquired a farm in Franklin, several city lots in Franklin, a farm in Weston, one in Riverdale and one on Worm Creek.<sup>49</sup>

Thomas diversified his farming operation and became involved with H. E. Shrives in the sheep business. They formed the Smart & Shrives Sheep Co. The company prospered and showed two thousand five hundred head of sheep plus sheds and wagons by 1901.<sup>50</sup>

Thomas was a merchant, also. He owned and operated the "Farmer's Union."<sup>51</sup> Later he became involved in the cooperative movement of the church. He subjugated his interests to the interests of the cooperative. He was one of the owners of a store called the "One-Eyed Co-op."<sup>52</sup> In 1889, he was one of the founders of the Oneida Mercantile Union which consolidated all the businesses in Franklin. In



a few years, as the cooperative movement gave way to individual ownership of businesses again, Thomas and his sons bought out many of the stockholders in the Oneida Mercantile Union.<sup>53</sup>

The Black Hawk War in Utah provided another opportunity for the leadership abilities of Thomas to be utilized. The war lasted from 1865–1867. Thomas was appointed a captain of the guards and fulfilled his responsibilities honorably.<sup>54</sup> There was constant fear of Indian attack. Many times the guard was called upon to fight or chase Indians out of the area.<sup>55</sup>

Thomas was a faithful Latter-day Saint. He was the first President of the branch organized in Franklin. In June, 1860, Brigham Young visited Franklin and organized a ward. Bishop Maughan suggested that President Young nominate a bishop. He nominated Preston Thomas. The membership voted unanimously to sustain Preston Thomas as bishop.<sup>56</sup> The new bishop chose Thomas S. Smart as one of his counselors. Thomas filled the position “for some time with great fidelity.”<sup>57</sup> He was a Seventy during the years he served in the bishopric. He was certified as an active Seventy in 1885 by Samuel R. Parkinson, “acting Bishop,” and by Robert L. Thomas, a President of the Forty-fifth Quorum of Seventies of Provo.<sup>58</sup>

The Oneida Stake of Zion was created in 1884.<sup>59</sup> In 1885, by the hand of Apostle Franklin D. Richards, Thomas was ordained a High Priest and set apart as a member of the Oneida Stake High Council.<sup>60</sup> In 1886, Thomas was “appointed to a Mission to England to PREACH THE GOSPEL. . . .” The call was issued on July 19, over the signatures of John Taylor, President of the Church and George Q.

Cannon, one of his counselors.<sup>61</sup> The mission was only for a few months duration and was primarily for the purpose of genealogical work, although Thomas preached to his English relatives, also.<sup>62</sup>

Thomas was generous with his resources as far as the church was concerned. Several times he sent teams across the plains for use by poor emigrants. On one occasion he made the trip himself to assist a group.<sup>63</sup> He donated to the Perpetual Emigrating Fund to help supply the needs of emigrants. In addition, he donated to the Presiding Bishop's Office.<sup>64</sup>

Thomas and Ann's children grew to maturity in Franklin. Ann supported her husband in all matters. She considered him the "head and Patriarch of the family and made him the real center and pivot around whom she and her children revolved." She was an example to her children in her love of music, generosity to the less fortunate, gracious hospitality, thrift, and courtesy.<sup>65</sup>

Ann was fifty-three years old when a freak accident took her life on June 22, 1876. She was "struck by lightning while sitting in her house, and instantly killed. Her husband and children were near her but were not hurt."<sup>66</sup> She was buried in the family cemetery on the Franklin farm. Her youngest child, Mary Jane, was ten years old at the time. Mary Jane was to be raised by her older sisters. A few years after the death of Ann, Thomas married Minnie Shrives and later, Margaret Justet in the Salt Lake Endowment House.<sup>67</sup>

All his life Thomas had been an active person. He stood about six feet tall, was "robust and well built," and weighed "about two hundred pounds." He was athletic and loved the outdoors. He had blue eyes and auburn hair.<sup>68</sup> He was a man who met the strug-



gles of life head on and turned them to his advantage. On April 18, 1901, at seventy-seven years of age, Thomas' life on this earth ended. He was buried in the family cemetery. His name has been perpetuated through his numerous descendants. A monument erected by the Sons of the Pioneers,<sup>69</sup> has been erected in memory of the Franklin pioneers, including Thomas,<sup>70</sup> and, for a man whose pioneer characteristics were as firm as the mountains, Mount Smart in Franklin County was named for him.<sup>71</sup>

## James Whaley Webster: From Franklin to Rexburg

JAMES WHALEY WEBSTER<sup>1</sup> was a leading churchman, stockraiser, dry farmer, contractor, businessman, and politician. He contributed substantially to the building of the modern Ricks College. "He was one of the great characters of Idaho," and "one of Idaho's greatest benefactors."<sup>2</sup> Jim was born in Franklin, Idaho, November 29, 1862. He was the second child and second son of William Lott and Emma Whaley Webster. He had four brothers and one sister.<sup>3</sup> He grew up with the example of dedication to church service, hard work, and success set by his parents. "His early life was spent combatting nature. His was the age of the survival of the fittest. He was compelled to stand upon his own feet and fight the battle against the elements and nature."<sup>4</sup> He learned to be self-sufficient in a frontier town setting. He learned "how to live in a frontier country, riding horses, working hard, rising early, planning" short and long-range activities.<sup>5</sup>

Jim passed his "early years in useful industry in the various departments of his father's diversified operations." He "acquired a basic knowledge of business principles and financial operations".<sup>6</sup>

During 1878 and 1879, Jim moved with his parents several times, following the advance of the Utah & Northern Railroad as it was building north from Franklin toward Montana. His father ran a mercantile

business and did quite well. In the fall of 1879, the family returned to Franklin.<sup>7</sup>

In the early 1880s, Jim helped his father build a new store and the family home, part of which was used as a hotel. During those years, the enforcement of the anti-polygamy laws was vigorous. Often federal marshals would lodge at the hotel. When their business was ascertained, Jim would get on his horse and ride about the countryside to warn the polygamists. He would knock "on windows to warn men to go into hiding to avoid being arrested."<sup>8</sup>

During his youth Jim had become close friends with William H. Smart, the son of Thomas Sharratt and Ann Hayter Smart. They were the same age and developed their friendship working and playing together. When they were eighteen, William decided to attend the University of Deseret (later the University of Utah in Salt Lake City<sup>9</sup>), but he did not have sufficient resources to do so. He borrowed twenty-seven dollars from the Websters to get him started. Nine dollars was paid directly back to Jim. William was to complete his schooling and became a school teacher in Franklin.<sup>10</sup> Later he spent years as a respected member of the faculty at Brigham Young College in Logan, Utah. Jim and William continued their close relationship. Jim was associated with his father in the mercantile business, and at the same time, involved in raising some sheep. Later the two young men would become business partners.

December 10, 1885, was a momentous day for Jim. On that day he and Mary Jane Smart were married in the Logan Temple. Apostle Marriner W. Merrill officiated at the ceremony.<sup>11</sup>

Mary Jane Smart had been born February 15, 1866, in Franklin. She was the youngest child of



Thomas Sharratt and Ann Hayter Smart, and the younger sister of William, Jim's friend. She attended school in Franklin. After the death of her mother her older sisters raised her and taught her homemaking skills. When her father remarried, she lived with her sisters until she left to go to college. She matriculated one year at Brigham Young College in Logan. After completing the year, she secured a position, in 1884, teaching school in Riverdale, Idaho in Oneida County.<sup>12</sup>

Mary and Jim had been friends for several years before they were married. She had an "even understanding temperament, with never a harsh word for anybody. Her eyes were kindly and understanding, but her mouth was straight and firm." Her "personal beauty and the great pride she took to always look her best," was impressive.<sup>13</sup> Certainly Jim was impressed and fell in love with her. His sweetheart became his eternal partner.

Early in their married life Jim and Mary set two important goals: "Their first and greatest goal was to become worthy of exaltation in our Father's Celestial Kingdom; and their second goal . . . was to provide a financial and spiritual climate that would encourage their children to develop each to his or her own full capacity." They "set their course and, like a boat sailing into the wind, moved against and around many obstacles toward their . . . goals."<sup>14</sup> Jim and Mary were the parents of five children: James S., May 9, 1887; Elmo S., April 14, 1889; Vida W., January 3, 1892; Kenneth S., October 7, 1895; and Lucille W., January 31, 1899.<sup>15</sup> James, Elmo, and Vida were born in Franklin. Kenneth was born in Wilford and Lucille in Rexburg.

In October, 1892, Jim entered into a partnership



with his friend and brother-in-law, William Smart. They were to organize the "Smart & Webster Livestock Company."<sup>16</sup> In 1893, the young men desired to expand their operation. William "sat up all night pleading with his father for a loan of \$100.00." He evidently received the money. He also borrowed money from his older brother, Tom. With this money plus what capital Jim had, they began looking for a band of sheep to lease. In 1894, they heard of a band of sheep that could be leased in the Egin Bench area of Idaho's Upper Snake River Valley.<sup>17</sup> They closed the deal, and were in the sheep business in a big way.

The families of Jim and William stayed in Franklin until early in 1895, when they moved to the Upper Snake River Valley. As the two mothers, each with three children, arrived at Market Lake (now known as Roberts) railroad station<sup>18</sup> they were met by Jim. "'Are these your wives and children?' the conductor jokingly asked." "'They certainly are,'" Jim replied. "Although this was said in fun, it had a deeper implication, for each of these fathers would have given all that he had for the benefit of the others family." The families were moved into log huts in what is now Plano.<sup>19</sup> The conditions were primitive, but these hardy people were of pioneer stock. They would have been indignant if someone had suggested they would have been better off back in Franklin teaching school and working in a store because their prospects in the Upper Snake River Valley were dismal at best. They understood clearly, as did their forbearers, that to falter meant defeat. They never considered turning back but faced a future of their own making with courage and determination.

In 1896, Jim and Mary and their children moved to the bustling community of Rexburg. It was a thirteen-year-old town in a six-year-old state. By 1896, Rexburg had become the largest town north of Idaho Falls. The town had been founded by Thomas E. Ricks, under the direction of President John Taylor of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A townsite had been surveyed in March, 1883.<sup>20</sup> The width of the streets readily identified the city as of Mormon origin.<sup>21</sup> A schoolhouse for elementary education had been built, along with a sawmill and gristmill. A newspaper, the *Rexburg Press*, was being published. The Bannock Stake of Zion had been created and an academy for secondary education was operating. In 1897, telephone lines were to be constructed,<sup>22</sup> and in November, 1899, under the auspices of the St. Anthony Railroad Company, a line was completed from Idaho Falls to Rexburg.<sup>23</sup> Jim and Mary could undoubtedly see the possibilities for advancement for themselves and their children in the expanding area.

## President Webster: Ricks Academy Booster

ON October 25, 1898, Lorenzo Snow, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith, the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus of Latter-day Saints received a phone call from Elder Heber J. Grant of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and were informed that "W. H. Smart and James W. Webster had made a donation of \$5,000 to the Utah Loan and Trust Company bank of Ogden, and held themselves in readiness to duplicate the amount if necessary."<sup>1</sup> William Smart had communicated with Elder Grant offering to aid the Utah Loan and Trust Company as he understood the institution was in financial distress, and the Church had an interest in the institution. Elder Grant responded that the institution was indeed in "distress and that its failure would cause loss to many people; but the Church was not directly interested in it." William "wrote back and said that whether or not it was the Church in distress or an institution that the Church wanted saved, he and his partner wished to help and they sent along a check for \$5,000.00"<sup>2</sup>

On Monday, April 29, 1901, Jim was sustained as the Second Counselor in the Stake Presidency of the Fremont Stake of Zion. The Stake Quarterly Conference session had begun on Sunday, April 28, but the sustaining of general and stake authorities took place during the afternoon session on Monday. The conference was presided over by Anthon H. Lund of the



Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He directed the sustaining of officers.<sup>3</sup> A vacancy had been created in the stake presidency when William F. Rigby, the first counselor to President Thomas E. Ricks, had died on March 23, 1901. President Ricks chose Elder Thomas E. Bassett, who had been the second counselor, as the new first counselor. Elder James Whaley Webster was called as the second counselor in the stake presidency.<sup>4</sup> President Webster was set apart by Apostle Lund.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to presiding over the ecclesiastical and temporal affairs of the Fremont Stake, the presidency had the additional responsibility to help administer the affairs of the Fremont Stake Academy. Presidents Ricks and Bassett were already members of the Board of Directors of the Academy as well as members of the Executive Committee. On May 17, 1901, at a meeting in the Rexburg Tithing Office, President Webster was formally installed, by unanimous vote, as a member of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee.<sup>6</sup>

By the time President Webster became involved in the operation of the Fremont Stake Academy, it had already undergone several changes, both in name and location. The school had been formally opened on November 12, 1888, and given the name of the Bannock Stake Academy to coincide with the name of the stake of which Rexburg was a part. The school, that first term, had eighty-two students and three teachers.<sup>7</sup> The students met in three rooms of the First Ward meeting house for instruction. The Academy was housed there until 1898, when it was moved to the upper floor of the Z. C. M. I. building and occupied two rooms.<sup>8</sup> Also, in 1898, the Bannock Stake was divided and the area north of Idaho Falls



became the Fremont Stake. The school now became the Fremont Stake Academy.<sup>9</sup> By 1900, the Academy was primarily a secondary school with some courses designed to prepare elementary teachers.<sup>10</sup> The Academy had survived financial difficulties during the 1890s. A large stone building was to be built to accommodate the increasing enrollment of the Academy. On June 25, 1900, George Q. Cannon, of the First Presidency, laid the corner stone of the new building. Construction would take three years and cost forty thousand dollars.<sup>11</sup>

One of the first major decisions with which President Webster was involved was choosing a new principal for the Academy. D. M. Todd tendered his resignation as principal on June 15, 1901. On the same day, Ezra Christiansen [Dalby]<sup>12</sup> was engaged at a salary of twelve hundred dollars per year.<sup>13</sup>

An immediate problem was whether the new building could be completed soon enough to hold classes during the winter of 1901–1902, or whether an offer from Z. C. M. I. to sell the Rexburg store for thirty-five hundred dollars should be accepted. The architect for the new building, C. M. Squires, indicated that it would take at least five thousand dollars to complete raising the walls and install a temporary roof. The decision was made to place the matter before the First Presidency.<sup>14</sup> President Snow favored the purchase of the Z. C. M. I. store for five hundred dollars down payment, fifteen hundred due on December 31, 1901, and the remaining fifteen hundred on December 31, 1902. The Executive Committee of the Board agreed to place the matter before the High Council and Stake Priesthood in a forthcoming meeting.<sup>15</sup> The High Council and Stake Priesthood members agreed to the purchase of the store and the

transaction was completed. Two rooms were remodeled and one hundred and fifty new seats were added to accommodate the increased enrollment.<sup>16</sup>

During August, 1901, President Webster and other members of the Board of Education visited many of the wards in the Fremont Stake. They took Principal Dalby with them. They spoke in sacrament meetings on the subject of helping finance the Academy and encouraged parents to send their children there.<sup>17</sup>

The academic term commenced on October 7, 1901, with about thirty-five students in attendance.<sup>18</sup> This number increased as the term progressed as students could sign up as convenient. The term concluded with closing exercises on December 20. A testimony meeting was held and about fifty students participated. "Elder Webster," represented the Board and spoke.<sup>19</sup>

The new term commenced on January 6, 1902, with over one hundred and sixty students in attendance.<sup>20</sup> More local students could attend during the winter months because of lack of farm work.

On December 24, 1901, President Webster left for Salt Lake City. He carried with him a financial statement of the Fremont Stake Academy. "In case the First Presidency wished to know" the financial condition of the institution, "it could be presented."<sup>21</sup>

While in Salt Lake City, President Webster was "authorized to borrow \$2300.00 on the best terms possible to meet the pressing demands of creditors."<sup>22</sup> The most pressing debt was for fifteen hundred dollars due Z. C. M. I. on December 31.

At the meeting of the Board on January 5, 1902, "President Webster stated that he had succeeded in



getting an extension of six months on the \$1500.00 we were owing Z. C. M. I. at six per cent and had also negotiated for a loan of \$1200.00 from Zions Savings Bank and Trust Company for one year from Dec. 31st at 8% and presented the note to the board as being ready for signature." The note was signed "with the understanding that it was to be used in payment first of \$500.00 borrowed from Webster [who had loaned the money to the Board to pay immediate debts] and balance on what is due Squires Bros. Lumber Company."<sup>23</sup>

In a further effort to raise money, President Webster and John T. Smellie, a member of the Board, were authorized to sell some of the Academy property on Main Street to Heber Sharp of Salt lake City. Smellie had proposed in a Board meeting "that we make him an offer of 60 feet front on Main by 9 rods fronting on the street to the east for \$1000.00 providing he erect thereon a two store building 60 x 100 feet." President Webster proposed to "try him for \$1200.00 first and reduce to \$1000.00 if we had to."<sup>24</sup> Mr. Sharp evidently did not accept either offer.

While there was great concern about paying the debts of the Academy, President Webster demonstrated his concern for the students. "On motion of J. W. Webster the account against Hyrum Ricks for tuition on last year of \$10.00 was ordered cancelled on account of sickness."<sup>25</sup>

The Fremont Stake conference, held January 25 and 26, 1902, in Rexburg, provided more than the usual interest. The stake presidency was to be reorganized. President Thomas E. Ricks had died on September 28, 1901, and he, and his counselors, Bassett and Webster, were to be officially released. Apostles John Henry Smith and George Teasdale

were the presiding authorities. Sessions were held at ten in the morning and two in the afternoon on Saturday. President Webster spoke at the afternoon session. He indicated that he

had done more work for the Church during the last nine months than in all his life before; had always donated and paid his tithes; but had done little else till latterly. Had worked unitedly with President Bassett, and had visited every ward in the stake excepting two; the people were doing well spiritually and financially. The academy was in good running order. The people should do all in their power to establish a good school; had worked hard to get this institution established for this and adjoining stakes. The people of Rexburg should do all in their power to accommodate all who may come to attend the academy next year; did all possible this year and succeeded in obtaining accommodations. We cannot afford to let our young people go to Utah when we have facilities at home; if the people here will furnish places for them we can keep them at home.<sup>26</sup>

After the afternoon session, the members of the Priesthood remained to participate in the selection of a new Stake President. Apostle Smith was to report the proceedings of the special meeting to the First Presidency and the Apostles in the temple in Salt Lake City on January 30. He and Apostle Teasdale had

met with the priesthood of the stake for the purpose of reorganizing its Presidency on Saturday afternoon, and invited the brethren present to each write on a slip of paper the names of three men of their choice for Stake President. He said that he told the brethren he wanted to ascertain if their spirit on this question was in harmony with the First Presidency. The result was that twenty-one names were written in all, and Bro. Bassett's name appeared on all the slips excepting six, and Bro. Webster's name appeared on all the slips excepting fifteen. Bro. Thomas E. Bassett was chosen to be president, and he selected James W. Webster and Charles H. Woodmansee as his counselors.<sup>27</sup>



Following the Sunday sessions of Conference, Thomas E. Bassett was ordained Stake President and set apart by Apostle Smith, who also set apart Woodmansee as Second Counselor. Webster was set apart by Apostle Teasdale.

Two important meetings of the Academy Board of Education took place following the Saturday and Sunday sessions of conference. On Saturday evening, Apostles Smith and Teasdale were in attendance at the meeting. In addition, the stake presidencies of the Bingham and Teton Stakes were present. Apostle Smith indicated that the "First Presidency could not sustain academies in each stake and that the stakes of Fremont, Bingham, and Teton comprise one educational district." He suggested that the presidencies of each stake comprise the board with five members constituting a quorum to transact business. President Bassett became the president of the board.<sup>28</sup> On Sunday the board met again. President Webster moved that "it be the sense of this meeting that the building as formerly intended for a joint academy-tabernacle building for Fremont Stake be erected exclusively for educational purposes." Also, since the name Fremont Stake Academy was no longer appropriate, a motion was made that the institution be named the "Smith Academy,"<sup>29</sup> named for "the Prophet Joseph and Pres. Joseph F. Smith."<sup>30</sup> Both motions carried unanimously. Presidents Bassett, Webster, and Woodmansee, were appointed as the executive committee to take charge of the business affairs of the new "Smith Academy."<sup>31</sup>

The name "Smith Academy" did not last long. At the board meeting March 5, 1902, a letter was read "from the First Presidency suggesting that . . . [the] school be named the Ricks Academy in honor of the

late President Thomas E. Ricks." A motion was made and carried that the name "Smith Academy" be reconsidered. A motion was then made by "C. H. Woodmansee, seconded by J. W. Webster, that our institution be named the Ricks Academy in honor of the late President T. E. Ricks. Carried."<sup>32</sup>

The erection of the new academy building required the attention of the board for many meetings. C. M. Squires was the architect. President Joseph F. Smith, of the First Presidency, suggested that hot air be used to heat the building. The rock was to be hauled from the quarry for sixty-five cents per ton. The building would cost about forty thousand dollars and be built by a contractor. The wards in the three stake area would be assessed on a per capita basis to defray the building expenses.<sup>33</sup> The plans had been presented to the First Presidency during the April Conference of the Church. Presidents Bassett and Webster made the presentation. The plans were accepted.<sup>34</sup> The building construction moved along. The hauling of stone and the movement of supplies was done with horses. President Webster had a big red barn on his property and the workers who brought teams of horses for work would board them there. His son, Kenneth, would water and feed the horses.<sup>35</sup>

Because of the number of students planning to attend the Academy, a boarding house or dormitory, was constructed. Principal Dalby was authorized to proceed with plans for the construction. The building was to be constructed on the northeast corner of the Academy property. It was completed in early December and dedicated on December 19, 1902, by President Bassett.<sup>36</sup>

The new Academy building was completed in



time for the opening of the 1903-1904 school year. The

new building was a large stone structure of fine design, and monumental in appearance. It was three stories high, and very commodious on the inside. There were two offices and six class rooms on the first floor. On the second floor there was two rooms for the principals offices, a library, and four class rooms. The third floor had a large auditorium and four class rooms. This gave four office rooms, a library, an auditorium, and fourteen class and laboratory rooms.

It was a glorious day when the school moved into this fine new building, and a new spirit was kindled on this occasion.

The new building was later dedicated on November 12, 1906, by Apostle John Henry Smith. From this time on November 12, had a double meaning for Ricks Academy patrons. It was the date the school was founded, and the date its first permanent building was dedicated.<sup>37</sup>

The Board of Education of Ricks Academy spent much energy during 1904, securing short term loans to pay immediate bills. Several notes to various parties were paid off after a nine thousand dollar loan at eight percent per annum for three years was acquired from the Deseret Savings Bank of Salt Lake City. The promissory note was secured by mortgaging the "Ricks Academy building and grounds."<sup>38</sup>

At the Stake Quarterly Conference, held July 29 and 30, 1905, Presidents Webster and Woodmansee were honorably released as the counselors to President Bassett.<sup>39</sup> They had asked to be released. Their reasons for doing so are not apparent. The editor of the *Rexburg Current-Journal*, indicated that

there was an element of sadness and regret that Presidents Webster and Woodmansee had seen fit to tender their resignations. We do not desire to criticise their action in this matter, since we do not know the circumstances and reasons that led to it. But we grieve to think that in their judgment they found it necessary to take such a step. Had it been possible for them to

continue in their high position, there would have been no limit to their opportunities for doing good, and developing strength and spiritual power among the people. They would have become pillars in the stake of Zion, beloved and honored while they lived and cherished in the memories of the Saints after they passed away. But, no doubt, they carefully considered the matter before they took action, and we have nothing further to say, except that they leave their place at the head of the stake, with the good will and blessings of all the people.<sup>40</sup>

At the July 31, 1905, meeting of the Board of Education (Apostles Francis M. Lyman and Charles W. Penrose were in attendance), President Bassett “explained that Presidents Webster and Woodmansee had resigned from the Presidency of the Stake and their resignations had been accepted . . . in the Quarterly Conference, at which time they had also been released as members of the board.”<sup>41</sup>

Jim maintained an active interest in the affairs of Ricks Academy. He and Peter G. Johnston of Blackfoot could see that the academic potential of the academy could be greatly advanced if the library could be expanded. At a special meeting of the Ricks Academy District Board, February 4, 1910,

two letters were read from Bro. James W. Webster to Pres. James Duckworth enclosing checks from Bro. Webster and Bro. Peter G. Johnston of Blackfoot for \$250.00 each to be applied as part payment on a library which they proposed to establish in the Academy amounting to \$1000.00 and which they proposed be known as “The Webster-Johnston Library.” The balance of the \$1000.00 they would pay before the beginning of school in 1910.

The following motions made by James Duckworth seconded by Don C. Walker was unanimously carried: That the Academy Board accept with thanks the splendid gift of One Thousand Dollars from Brothers J. W. Webster and Peter G. Johnston, said money to be used in the establishment of a library for the Ricks Academy and that the Board write to the Brethren, expressing their thanks and also their sincere appreciation for the gift.



They also will be pleased to adopt the suggestion of naming the library established, "The Webster-Johnston Library."

The following letter was written by the Board:

Elder Jas. W. Webster  
Rexburg, Ida.  
Peter G. Johnston,  
Blackfoot, Ida.

Rexburg, Feb. 4th, 1910

Dear Brethren:

The members of the Ricks Academy Board, hereby express to you their appreciation and heartfelt thanks for the splendid contribution of \$1000.00 which you have made to the Academy to be used for a library. No gift could have been more acceptable at this time as the Institution is very much in need of books. We desire to assure you that the money will be used to the very best advantage, and we shall take pleasure in reserving a special section of the library for the books purchased with this money, and naming it the Webster-Johnston Library, in accordance with your suggestion.

Again thanking you for your liberality, we beg to remain,

Sincerely your Brethren,

Thos. E. Bassett  
Mark Austin  
Albert Heath  
Jas. Duckworth

Heber Austin  
Don C. Walker  
Daniel G. Miller  
Don C. Driggs

Ezra C. Dalby<sup>42</sup>

The announcement of the gift to the Academy library was made at a most appropriate time. The occasion was the February 22, 1910, Ricks Academy Exhibition Day.

Great enthusiasm and interest in the event had been developed over the entire educational district embracing the stakes of Blackfoot, Bingham, Fremont, and Yellowstone and there was record attendance. The train from the south arrived about 12 o'clock with about 500 visitors. The train from the north was snowbound at Chester so that few attended from that part. Great numbers came in sleighs. Ample provision had been made for their reception and they were hauled from the depot in sleighs furnished by citizens of the town.

Throughout the building there was a great display of student's work from themes, exercises, and maps to hand-made furniture in the carpentry room and delicious luncheon prepared by the domestic science girls.

The programs consisted of a drama at 11 a.m. by the sophomore class, the operetta at 3 p.m. by the choir, a game of basketball at 5:30 p.m. and the operetta again at night. There was something of interest throughout the entire day. Everybody was more than pleased with what they saw and many were very enthusiastic in their praise.<sup>43</sup>

Before the operetta, "A Nautical Knot," commenced in the afternoon, Principal Dalby took the opportunity to announce to the large audience that Webster and Johnston had donated one-thousand dollars to be used for library expansion. The announcement "was greeted with great applause."<sup>44</sup> Dalby concluded the announcement by stating that the library addition would be known as the "Webster-Johnston Library."<sup>45</sup>

With the money the library was enlarged to two rooms and many new books were on hand when the fall 1910 term began. The "magnificent gift of Hon. J. W. Webster and Hon P. G. Johnston" had been usefully expended. Miss Belle George was employed as the librarian.<sup>46</sup>

Despite the fact that Jim was an ardent supporter of Ricks Academy, he was not afraid to speak out if he felt that there were problems there. He began talking to several people of the area who felt, like him, that things at the Academy were not as they should be. The word got to the members of the Executive Committee of the Academy and they requested that he appear at a committee meeting and express his complaints to them. He met with the Executive Committee on March 11, 1910, and "stated that he had looked into the matter and felt that the

institution was growing weaker instead of stronger. The attendance was decreasing every year and he felt that perhaps a change would be advantageous."<sup>47</sup> Although he evidently did not directly mention Principal Dalby as the cause of his discontent, Dalby was being caught up in controversy that would continue and grow until he resigned from the Academy.

Jim returned to a meeting of the Executive Committee on April 1, 1910, in company with several prominent men of the community. Several expressed their opinions of the situation:

Nathan Ricks stated that there seems to be considerable being said just now with reference to the work being done in the Academy. The Institution is not growing as it should and he was ready to do anything he could to help those in charge to better conditions.

Oliver C. Ormsby said he could not say what was the matter but something certainly was wrong. He had children to send to school and felt compelled to send them away to other schools.

Thos. E. Ricks said he had, until the last two years, been one of the most ardent supporters of the Academy but during the last two years he had been unable to get his children to attend. He had a high regard for Principal Dalby, but something was certainly wrong.

Silas S. Smith said he had information that there was somewhere near 100 students belonging to the Ricks Academy District attending other schools, which should not be.

James W. Webster said that he has letters from four schools outside the Ricks Academy District which showed that near 100 students belonging to Fremont and Bingham Counties were in attendance there. Was interested in the growth of the Academy but felt that conditions were not as they should be.

Nels P. Hansen said the attendance at the Academy was decreasing notwithstanding the increase in population of the District.

William A. Walker said that the location of the Academy in Rexburg brought him here to educate his family. The last two years he had been unable to interest his boys in school as there seems to be no restraint upon the students.



Pres. Albert Heath [a member of the Executive Committee] said the Executive Committee were extremely interested in the development of the Academy but the matter of employing a Principal had been left largely with the General Supt. of Church Schools. So far as he was concerned he was not competent to pass upon the qualifications of teachers for the school. One reason for the decrease in attendance was the elimination of the lower grades.

Pres. Thos. E. Bassett said that another reason for the young people going from the Ricks Academy District to other schools was the convenience they have for physical exercise and he hoped that the condition would be relieved in the near future.<sup>48</sup>

The complaints seemed to be so general that the Board surveyed some of the people themselves. They presented their findings at a meeting in Salt Lake City in the office of General Superintendent Horace H. Cummings. President Duckworth pointed out that he did not know of any hostile feelings toward Principal Dalby in the Blackfoot Stake. However, in some "quarters the feeling prevailed that Prin. Dalby lacked warmth and spirituality." President Mark Austin, of the Fremont Stake Presidency, noted that "possibly Principal Dalby did lack warmth, but he was certainly competent as a teacher and no objection could be raised on that score." Superintendent Cummings supported the Principal. The outcome of the meeting was that Dalby was hired for another year, and the board promised to "boost him and the Academy generally in every legitimate way and thereby create as favorable an opinion of the Academy as possible."<sup>49</sup>

The matter was not settled as far as Jim, Nathan Ricks, Oliver C. Ormsby, and William A. Walker were concerned. They called on Superintendent Cummings to explain that "they thought a change in the teaching force of the Academy was necessary to



the best interest of the school." Cummings agreed to "present the situation to the General Board of Education and recommend that one of the apostles be appointed to visit Rexburg . . . and meet the committee above mentioned and see if something could not be done to stop the agitation."<sup>50</sup> The General Board was appraised of the situation by Cummings and "thought there was not sufficient ground to warrant further consideration."<sup>51</sup> The agitation continued, however, and after some General Authorities of the Church became dissatisfied with the teaching of Principal Dalby, he was asked to resign in 1914.<sup>52</sup>

From the time Jim was baptized at age eight<sup>53</sup> until his death he participated in the activities of the Church, both physically and financially. He was on a committee to help finance construction of the First Ward Chapel, as well as the Stake Tabernacle.<sup>54</sup> He was on the Stake High Council for some time.<sup>55</sup> He was called to serve a short mission to California. He was set apart as a missionary on November 13, 1915, by Apostle Francis M. Lyman. He left for the mission field on November 14, 1915, and returned February 25, 1916.<sup>56</sup>

H. A. Wright, Jim's friend and Bishop of the Rexburg First Ward for many years, spoke of Jim's "faithfulness to church duties" as part of the sermon he delivered at Jim's funeral. Certainly it was a fitting epitaph.

Jim's religion was of a practical nature. Bishop James Cook indicated that he always supplied cords of wood to the widows and needy of the ward. In addition, Lucille, Jim's daughter, remembered that the widows were always taken care of with coal, flour, and different kinds of food to see them through the winter.<sup>58</sup> Jim practiced what the scriptures preached.

## Agriculturalist

THE first few years Jim and Mary were in Rexburg in the sheep business were “years of great hardship and self-denial.”<sup>1</sup> The Smart and Webster enterprise could easily have gone out of existence. Jim spent his time on the range. He followed his herders with supplies, and advised them concerning range conditions. The sheep, originally about three thousand head,<sup>2</sup> were trailed to the lava beds for the spring and summer, then followed all the way to Wells, Nevada. Jim made arrangements with farmers along the route to keep horses for him. This way fresh horses were always available.<sup>3</sup>

In February, 1896, some sheepherders had been shot south of Twin Falls, Idaho (not far from the route Jim used). “Diamondfield” Jack Davis had been arrested and was convicted for the murders. He was sentenced to hang but the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. Later Governor Frank W. Hunt granted him an unconditional pardon. Davis had been hired by some cattlemen to see that sheep did not trespass on what they considered their range, despite the fact the range was open to anyone who wanted to use it.<sup>4</sup> Jim must have been aware of the antipathy between the sheepmen and the cattlemen. He would have defended his right to the free range, although it appears he never had to defend that right.

While Jim did the field work, William took



care of the "financial details of the business." He bought and sold the sheep.<sup>5</sup> Most of the sheep were sold in Omaha, Nebraska.<sup>6</sup>

The winter of 1894-95, was especially rough. Jim and William's leased herd of sheep got caught in a blizzard and "from one-third to one-half of the sheep perished." They did not quit. Rather the men determined to rebuild the herd to its full strength before turning it back to the owners.<sup>7</sup>

By 1897, Jim and William had built their sheep business to the point where they had about fifty-three hundred head on the range. They "were in debt for every one of them." The ewes were "valued at \$1.35 per head." Jim and William had established a good reputation and their creditors had confidence in them and did not foreclose on the outstanding notes. By 1901, that confidence was justified as the business was operating on a sound financial basis.<sup>8</sup> On March 30, 1901, Jim conveyed by warranty deed, one-hundred and sixty acres and five shares of stock in the Egin Irrigating Canal Company, to "Smart and Webster, a firm doing business as sheep raisers" in Fremont county.<sup>9</sup>

Through those years of hard work and severe trial, Jim and William's wives had provided the moral strength and encouragement their husbands needed to continue their labors. The women realized that they could substantially contribute to the well-being of their husbands by facing the privation, financial loss and discouragement without complaint.<sup>10</sup>

In 1900, John Thompson was hired by Jim and William to help in the sheep business. John did his work well and in 1903, he purchased a small band of culls from Jim and started his own flock. His sheep business returned good profits and, by 1915, he had

“nearly reached the hundred thousand dollar mark in wealth.” Much of his profit he invested in real estate in Rexburg.<sup>11</sup>

Early in 1903, William moved his family to Heber City, Utah. He tried to talk Jim and Mary into moving to Utah also. Mary, much as she loved her brother, refused to move again so the Websters stayed in Rexburg.<sup>12</sup>

William, despite moving to Utah, maintained his interest in the business. On September 30, 1903, the Smart and Webster Live Stock Company was incorporated. Jim had the controlling interest holding three-hundred shares worth thirty thousand dollars. William had one-hundred shares worth ten thousand dollars. Additionally, Frederick Smart Parkinson bought sixty shares worth six thousand dollars, John A. Palmer bought thirty shares worth three thousand dollars, and James Gillespie bought ten shares worth one thousand dollars.<sup>13</sup> Frederick Smart Parkinson (ordinarily he was simply known as “F. S.”) was appointed secretary and manager of the company and maintained that position until 1911, when he was called on a mission to the northern states.<sup>14</sup> F. S. was the nephew of Jim and Mary, and also William’s nephew.

The sheep were now being ranged from the Sheridan Valley in Montana to Indian Creek in Wyoming, where the home camp was located.<sup>15</sup> Pete Jensen was the company foreman.<sup>16</sup>

Jim became a familiar figure to the livestock men in Wyoming. He was elected manager of the Wood River Live Stock Company of Wyoming, in 1904,<sup>17</sup> and helped manage the livestock industry in that state.

In the spring the shearing plant was set up near



Spring Creek, about twenty-five miles southeast of Rexburg. Some water was hauled from Moody Creek, about two miles south.<sup>18</sup> After the shearing was completed the ewes and lambs would be started on the way to Montana. The culls would be put up for sale. The wool would be marketed. In the fall the lambs would be shipped to market. From 1895 to 1904, the company shipped between fifty to ninety railroad carloads to market.<sup>19</sup>

In 1905, Jim and William decided to divide the assets of the Smart & Webster Live Stock Company. The company name was retained but now Jim had sole control of the business. Up to that time each family had drawn on the assets of the company for personal family needs. They now "divided the assets with no accounting being made for withdrawals that each had had for his own personal use."<sup>20</sup>

Jim and Alex McOmie jointly owned eighty acres which they sold to the Smart & Webster Live Stock Company for thirty-eight hundred dollars. For the token sum of one dollar, half interest was conveyed back to Jim, while the other half interest stayed in the company.<sup>21</sup>

To ensure that adequate water would be available for any land Jim bought, he helped organize the Fremont Water and Reservoir Association, Limited. It was incorporated January 15, 1906. Jim served on the Board of Directors. He owned sixty shares of capital stock valued at three thousand dollars. Mary owned twenty shares valued at one thousand dollars.<sup>22</sup>

Under the auspices of the Smart & Webster Live Stock Company, Jim bought one-hundred and eighty acres for \$1046.17 at a sheriff's sale on August 6, 1907. The land belonged to Ira N. Hinckley and was sold

to satisfy a debt owed by Hinckley to the Consolidated Wagon and Machine Company. In two years Hinckley was allowed to redeem the land by paying the \$1046.17 to the Smart & Webster Live Stock Company.<sup>23</sup>

To help promote the sheep industry in Idaho, Jim was active in the Idaho Woolgrowers' Association. After attending the woolgrowers' meeting in Caldwell early in 1910, Jim was characterized as "one of the most successful flockmasters of the state."<sup>24</sup>

The sheep business continued to grow. By November 1, 1908, the capital stock of the company amounted to twenty thousand, seven hundred dollars. By July 28, 1914, the value of the sheep was listed as:

4473 ewes	@ \$4.25 =	\$19,010.25
1069 culls	@ \$4.00 =	\$ 4,276.00
127 rams	@ \$8.00 =	<u>\$ 1,016.00</u>
		\$24,302.25

Additionally, on January 1, 1915, the following was charged to capital stock:

Correls	= \$	167.72
Camp Wagons	= \$	160.00
Other Wagons	= \$	110.00
Outfit	= \$	150.00
Horses	= \$	655.00
Shearing Plant	= \$	<u>450.00</u>
		\$1,692.72 <sup>25</sup>

An inventory was necessary because in 1914, F. S. Parkinson and his brother, Joseph Smart Parkinson, negotiated with Jim to buy the assets of the Smart & Webster Live Stock Company. During the year they purchased fourteen thousand sheep and all range rights and organized the J. S. & F. S. Parkinson Sheep Company.<sup>26</sup> In 1915, negotiations were com-



pleted, and J. S. and F. S. purchased the remainder of the sheep and other assets of the Smart & Webster Live Stock Company.<sup>27</sup> They also purchased the "entire sheep interests of Thos. E. Ricks, Jr., a well known sheep man."<sup>28</sup> They reorganized as the Parkinson Livestock Company.<sup>29</sup> The Parkinsons went into the sheep business in a big way, Jim retired from the business. He could now turn more attention to his dry farming operation.

Thomas E. Ricks was probably the first to see the farming potential of the Rexburg bench. He had had experience with farming without irrigation on a tract of land near Cache Junction, Utah. He had farmed there for six years successfully. When he settled in Rexburg, "he constantly called the attention of his sons and many other settlers to the possibilities of the dry bench south and east of Rexburg as the best agricultural district in the valley." In 1896, he took his son, Hyrum, up to the bench and advised him to take out a homestead patent on one-hundred and sixty acres. Hyrum followed the advice, although "leading citizens of the valley rather scoffed at the idea of making a success of dry farming." Hyrum was successful and soon others were filing on homesteads.<sup>30</sup> The Homestead Act had been passed in 1862, and became effective on January 1, 1863, during the administration of Abraham Lincoln. One-hundred and sixty acres was the maximum per qualified adult. By the turn of the twentieth century it had become obvious that one-hundred and sixty acre homesteads in the semi-arid regions of the West was not adequate to sustain a farming family. The amount of acreage allowable was increased to six hundred and forty acres. The dry land farmers benefited the most.<sup>31</sup>

In the fall of 1898, Albert Luthy showed up at Henry J. Flamm's threshing machine operation, near Sugar City, with the wheat from his dry farm on the bench.<sup>32</sup> This is the first recorded instance of a crop being harvested from the non-irrigated benchlands.

The use of the term "dry farming" to describe a method of farming is somewhat misleading. The farmer hopes that his crops will indeed be irrigated. Sufficient snow is needed to supply cover for his winter wheat crop, as well as provide spring moisture for the soil. The spring and summer rains are needed to aid the crop growth to maturity. The soil must be able to retain moisture, and over ten inches of rain is necessary for success.<sup>33</sup> Special soil preparation techniques were developed, as well as the type of seed best adapted to dry farm conditions.

The most successful dry farmers in the Snake River plains area are becoming more and more convinced that alternate cropping and fallowing is the most profitable way to grow wheat. Spring plowing, summer tilling, and fall sowing distribute the labor well, keeping men and teams busy most of the year.

The Turkey Red variety of the "Crimean group of hard red winter wheats," was the most commonly used seed, as it was adapted to high altitudes.<sup>34</sup>

Charles H. Woodmansee was the "original promoter of dry farming" in a big way on the Rexburg Bench. He began his operation in 1900.<sup>35</sup>

Charles had arrived in Rexburg from Ogden in 1887. He bought six hundred and forty acres on Moody Creek, about five miles east of Rexburg.<sup>36</sup> He cultivated and irrigated the land. Additionally, he paid "special attention to superior breeds of cattle and sheep, in both lines of which he was in possession of extensive herds."<sup>37</sup>

As sheepmen, and residents of the same commun-



ity, Jim and Charles soon became acquainted and developed a friendship which would lead them into a business relationship. Both men invested their money in sagebrush covered lands east and south of Rexburg. Some considered that investing in the bench lands made Jim and Charles "fit subjects for a sanitarium for the feeble minded."<sup>38</sup> Initially the men bought two homestead relinquishments.<sup>39</sup> To obtain working capital they sold stock they held in the Consolidated Feeder Canal Company, to the Salisbury Company of New Jersey.<sup>40</sup>

In 1906, Jim and Charles incorporated under the name "Woodmansee and Webster Company." Each man owned eleven hundred and fifty shares of stock worth eleven thousand, five hundred dollars. Mary Webster and Vilate Woodmansee each owned one hundred shares worth one thousand dollars. Henry J. Flamm owned ten shares worth one hundred dollars.<sup>41</sup> This partnership was to last several years and see Jim and Charles become the largest dry farmers in the area and one of the largest in the state.<sup>42</sup>

To increase the land holdings of the company, Jim bought one hundred and sixty-seven acres from Louis and Jennie Purser early in 1908.<sup>43</sup> Jim had loaned money to the Purser's in 1907, which had been secured by six hundred and forty acres. This mortgage had been paid in full in 1908.<sup>44</sup>

The men had little precedent upon which to base their farming techniques. They were not afraid to experiment and improvise. They began to invest in new machinery.<sup>45</sup> Both men were of pioneer stock who had taught them not to just "make do," but to improve. They had the pioneer sense of daring in the face of great odds and the willingness to strike out in new directions.

Horses were used extensively in the early years of the century to pull the farm machinery. Large numbers of horses were necessary. Jim and Charles were enterprising enough to contract their horses out in the winter so they did not have to feed them and, at the same time, realize some income from them. In the winter of 1905-06, they leased the horses to the Union Pacific Railroad. Track was being laid west of Tooele, Utah and horses were needed. Charles Joseph Zollinger was hired to take the horses and some men to Tooele.<sup>46</sup>

Jim and Charles began to buy other land. In a few years they had "acquired 5,000 acres of the most beautiful land in the entire valley, all under one fence."<sup>47</sup> To get operating capital, they mortgaged most of their land, in 1908, to the Ogden Savings Bank. Two thousand acres were mortgaged for a loan of fifteen thousand dollars at eight percent per annum. Additionally, another sixteen hundred acres plus stock in the Fremont Water and Reservoir Association, Limited, was mortgaged for twelve thousand dollars at eight percent per annum. Both mortgages were paid in full in 1914.<sup>48</sup>

Jim was the farm overseer and Charles was the business manager.<sup>49</sup> They would plant half the acreage in Turkey Red and summer fallow the other half. Later, they started planting some Blue Stem spring wheat.<sup>50</sup> Jim summarized the growth and farming methods of the farm for a newspaper reporter:

"Our company began operations in Fremont county some four or five years ago. We are handling about 4,000 acres of dry farming, raising mostly barley and wheat. We began the first year by turning over some 200 acres of sage brush and sod. We plowed the ground in the spring, sowing the barley the same



spring and the wheat in the fall. We put in what is known as blue bearded barley, and winter fife wheat. The yield for the first year an average of 22 bushels of barley and 20 bushels of wheat per acre.

"In preparing the land we followed immediately behind our plows with the disc and harrows, putting the soil in the best possible tilth for new land and of course, being careful to conserve all possible moisture by discing and harrowing the land often during the summer, up to the time for sowing the wheat. The returns were considered very satisfactory and yielded a fair profit.

"The second year we turned over some 200 acres more of new land, following the same general method in preparing the soil for the seed bed. We used the same variety of barley getting from that portion put in on the old plowing about 25 bushels per acre, and on the new land about 20 bushels. We changed the variety of wheat to gold coin and on the old land got 25 bushels per acre and 20 on the new plowing.

"The third year we added about 500 acres more of new land and put in about 250 acres in barley, getting an average yield of about 25 bushels per acre. We had in about 750 acres of wheat — the gold coin variety — and this yielded an average of 25 bushels on the old land and 20 bushels on the new plowing per acre.

"The fourth year we added another 500 acres of new land, making about 1,400 acres under plow. We sowed the same varieties of barley and wheat, getting yields a little in advance of previous years, probably on account of more old land and the possibility of better conditions of cultivation. The average yield I think ran about 26 bushels to the acre.

"Last year we added about 800 acres more new plowing. We changed this year to Turkey red winter wheat and secured a better yield. On the sod land we got an average of 25 bushels and something better than this on the old land. We also sowed 500 acres of oats and secured a yield of 32 bushels per acre, the oats running 37 pounds to the bushel. Our 300 acres of barley also gave us a good yield.

"Yes we figure on summer fallowing about one-half of our land. We believe this is essential, handling the land thoroughly during the summer with disc and harrow to keep a mulch of loose soil on top to conserve the moisture.



"I do not think there has been any material variation in the seasons, as to rainfall or other climatic conditions during our operations. I think the seasons have about averaged. I suppose we have an annual rainfall of from 12 to 14 inches or in that neighborhood. No, there is no doubt in my mind that by keeping the soil in proper condition of cultivation and the top mulch in shape we do hold the moisture of both the year we summer fallow and the crop year for the benefit of the growing crops. I think our operations have demonstrated this beyond doubt.

"For this reason we are planning about 1,600 acres of Turkey red wheat sowed last fall, and some 1,400 acres now ready for oats and barley the coming spring. For these latter crops the land was plowed last fall. As early as possible in the spring we disc and harrow this land again and sow the seed.

"There is no question in my mind as to the advantage of plowing and discing the land in the fall, leaving it in good shape to absorb all the moisture that comes either in the shape of rain or snow. There is considerable snow on this land now and our land being in good shape as it melts it goes down into the ground instead of running off, and thus available for the crop.

"We use a big traction engine [The traction engine on display in Smith Park in Rexburg belonged to the Woodmansee and Webster Company.] for plowing, discing and harrowing, performing all three operations at once and we use for harvesting the improved harvester and thresher, cutting and threshing at the same time by steam power. We figure that it costs us about \$6.50 per acre. Coal costs us about \$5.50 per ton laid down at the ranch. We pay an engineer 50 cents an hour and four foreman 30 cents an hour. The men pay just what their board costs, the rates running from 60 to 75 cents per day.

"Harvesting-cutting and threshing-costs us an average of 3 cents per bushel, not including the cost of sacks. Yes, we have no complaint to make of the returns. They have been very satisfactory indeed.

"The average costs of our land per acre runs from \$20 to \$25. I consider that we have one of the best dry farm sections in the state — perhaps of the west. Is there more land? Yes, sir, thousands of acres in Fremont county, just as good as ours. There are all kinds of dry farming opportunities there — I personally consider it one of the best farming opportunities in the



J. W. Webster as a young boy.



J. W. Webster, taken in 1915.



The J. W. Webster home built in 1901 in Rexburg, Idaho. Later dismantled to build a new home in 1930.



Webster's summer home. J. W. and his wife lived here for many summers on the dry farm. (Tom Cook picture)





J. W. Webster home built in 1930 on same site of previous home at 72 No. 1st. East, Rexburg, Idaho.



Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Webster in their new home built in Rexburg in 1930. (Anderson Studio)



Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Webster in front of the log cabin in Plano  
where they lived the first year, 1895-1896.



J. W. Webster and grandson Bobby about 1938 on back water  
near McRae's bridge in Island Park.





Summer of 1940 at Lava Hot Springs at Webster Reunion. Four generations — Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Webster, Kenneth (son) and his daughter and granddaughter, Teddie Lue Wood and Teddie Lue Wood, Jr.



Mrs. J. W. Webster made first donation for new Madison County Library in 1959. Lola M. Webster, Chairman of the drive and Dr. Blaine H. Passey accepting the donation.





First row: Jay Webster (E), Bert Webster (E), Bob Webster (K), Jim Howe (L), Bill Webster (J). Second row: Floette (Mrs. J. S. Webster), Vida W. Rainey, James S. Webster, Kenneth S. Webster, James W. Webster, Lola (Mrs. Kenneth Webster), Mrs. J. W. Webster, Elmo S. Webster, Lucille W. Howe, Lewis M. Webster (K). Third row: Kenneth M. (Bud) Webster (K), Mary Rainey (Murrett) (V), Teddie Lue Webster (Wood) (K), Herman Zollinger, Lavina Webster Zollinger (E), Ruby Webster, Tom R. Webster (J), Royal G. Howe, Mark Webster (E). Fourth row: Chester Webster (E), Bill Rainey (V), Marianna Webster (Porter) (J), Emma Dean Rainey (Cave) (V), Frank Webster (J), Marie J. Webster, Dr. Jim W. Webster (J), Mary Webster Romrell (E). Fifth row: Dr. Wm. Rainey, Lou (Mrs. Elmo Webster), Effie E. Merrill (Mother of Lola), Hyrum B. Romrell. Golden Wedding Anniversary Dinner held at the 4th Ward Church under direction of Mrs. Merrill and Lou Webster. Absent — Reed Webster (E) and Kathryn Howe (L).



June 1960. Kenneth Webster and family — Lewis, Kenneth M. (Bud), Robert.  
Teddie Lue Wood, Kenneth and Lola.





William Lott Webster, father of J. W. Webster.



Mrs. Emma Whaley Webster, wife of Wm. Lott Webster,  
father of J. W. Webster.





THE FAMILY OF THOMAS SHARRATT AND ANN HAYTER SMART

Grandmother's (Mrs. J. W. Webster's) family — about 1882.

Seated (Left to Right) William Henry Smart, Mary Jane S. Webster, Thomas Smart, Thomas Sharratt Smart, Mary Ann Fleet S. Morrison, Sarah Ann S. Hawkes, Alice Fleet S. Pratt. Standing (Left to Right) Maria S. Parkinson, Charlotte Elizabeth S. Parkinson, Louise Fleet S. Mendenhall, Eliza S. Meham.





William Lott Webster home, Franklin, Idaho.



J. W. Webster and partner, Charley Woodmansee, in front of the cookhouse at the Big Ranch. (Tom Cook Collection)





Tom Cook (foreman of the Big Ranch) on horse; Kenneth Webster standing; Jim Webster in wagon at Red elevator — 1915.



Red elevator, built about 1912.



Tom Cook, foreman.





Mode of transportation.



View of cookhouse at the Big Ranch. Grain wagon teams. Probably coming in for dinner.



Kenneth Webster showing off the height of the wheat on the dry farm.



Shoeing horses — this took one man's time, as it was very important to care for horses' feet.



It took 24 horses to pull the combine.





Wool shipment from Smart and Webster Livestock Co.



Steam engines and water tanks which were used for farm work.





Harvesting with the steam engine which was operated with coal — heating water to make steam.



Water tank and steam engine on the dry farm.



Deep furrow plowing.

entire west. We have an excellent market for all we raise at Rexburg, which is a town of some 3,500 population and growing nicely. Our wheat sold at \$1.40 to \$1.65 per 100 pounds for the Turkey red variety this year.

“There is, of course, no question, in my mind as to there being a large acreage of dry farming land in the state — that is, of lands upon which it will be possible to raise profitable crops of grain and where it is impossible to irrigate. I consider this one of the great resources of the state.”

“And there is no question but that Mr. Webster is doing his full share to develop this resource,” concluded the reporter.<sup>51</sup>

Jim and Charles spent thirty thousand dollars to bring water from Moody Creek to the ranch headquarters. The water was used for culinary purposes by all the farmers in the area.<sup>52</sup> There was an insufficient amount to use for irrigation of crops, although the garden by the Webster farmhouse and some alfalfa was irrigated from the stream.<sup>53</sup> The water was made available to other farmers for “a nominal fee, not even sufficient for assessment work on the canal.”<sup>54</sup>

To get the water out of Moody Creek a dam was built to back up the water. A fish ladder was installed so the fish migrations would not be disrupted. The ditch was dug from the dam to the farm about six miles away. The farmers through whose land the ditch ran were happy to have it built. They hauled water from the ditch and helped maintain it. Jim personally supervised the maintenance of the ditch.<sup>55</sup>

Jim and Charles erected their own telephone lines to the farmhouse. They built their own grain elevator which would hold seventy thousand bushels of grain. They hired an average of twenty men and paid them a wage and provided room and board. Jim was in charge of the men and had “an efficient way



of dealing” with them “for the best results for all concerned.” Everything was run in “perfect order,” every man knew what was expected of him and did it. “There is no hurry and bluster” around the farm, “but a steady pace that brings results.”<sup>56</sup>

To secure additional capital, twenty-two hundred acres of company land, along with some stock in the Fremont Water and Reservoir Association, Limited, were mortgaged at eight percent per annum to David Eccles of Ogden, Utah for fifteen thousand dollars. This transaction took place on September 4, 1911. The mortgage was paid in full on November 28, 1914.<sup>57</sup>

In 1909, Charles became sick and gradually declined in health. He was able to manage the business affairs of the farm until within three months of his death, December 2, 1911. He was forty-four years old.<sup>58</sup>

After the death of Charles, Jim continued to operate the property efficiently. The Woodmansee share of the profits going into the estate. Two thousand more acres were added to the business by 1913, bringing the total to seven thousand. During that year about twenty-five hundred acres of grain were harvested. “Mr. James W. Webster was heard to say: ‘We could haul into Rexburg 1000 bushels per day for 100 days.’ That means, of course, that the Woodmansee & Webster farm produced during the year 1913, one-tenth of a million bushels.” The grain would fill “five trainloads” of “sixty cars each.”<sup>59</sup>

In March, 1915, the Woodmansee & Webster Company mortgaged slightly over one thousand acres and water rights from Moody Creek to the Continental Life Insurance Company of Ogden, Utah. Fifteen thousand dollars at eight percent per annum

was received. The mortgage was paid in full July 10, 1924.<sup>60</sup>

Early in 1915, Vilate Pincock Woodmansee, the widow of Charles, decided to sell her interest in the Woodmansee & Webster Company. She held twenty-seven hundred shares of stock. Jim held twenty-three hundred shares. A local newspaper announced that the sale was made to Adam Patterson, an Ogden capitalist, Chris Jensen and M. Hillman, both local farmers. However, during a ten day period before the sale became final, other bids could be received. Timothy J. Winter submitted a bid nearly five thousand dollars more than had previously been bid. The other bidders would not go higher so most of the shares were sold to Winter.<sup>61</sup> Additionally, an interest was sold to Thomas Cook, who had been the foreman of the farm for many years, and to attorney Orson P. Soule, who had served for some time as Jim's agent, and was currently the secretary for the company. "The price paid for the holding would make the ranch worth over \$200,000."<sup>62</sup>

Harvesting of the crop in 1915, provided a model of efficiency. Twenty-eight hundred acres of wheat were combined, producing over one hundred thousand bushels. "During eleven days of the run they made an excellent record, 45,955 bushels of grain was harvested and put in the elevator with two combined harvesters and help of eighteen men. The cost of harvesting during those eleven days amounted to a little less than 2 cents per bushel."<sup>63</sup>

The efficiency of the dry farming operation gained Jim national respect. "Classed as the greatest and best farmer in the intermountain west, by the Agricultural College of Utah, and many well informed men on farming throughout our country. Mr.

Webster had done much to gain and hold this title. He had developed a new industry in this part of the state. Not only our state but the entire west has been benefited.”<sup>64</sup> The commencement exercises at the Agricultural College in Logan, Utah, in 1913, provided the setting for Jim, and others, to be honored as “practical farmers, to whom college opportunities had not been available. . . . Upon each one was conferred the degree of Master Farmer. . . . They were entitled to this recognition from the quality of their farming operations.”<sup>65</sup>

Few farmers had the steam equipment Jim had. Most of the harvesting in the area was done by horses for several years after Jim began using steam equipment. Jim still owned many horses, and he would make them available to his neighbors. William H. Blunk, who was born in 1906, remembers that they needed twelve horses to operate their harvester. Some harvests his father needed some more horses. His father would say: “Well, I know where I can get some horses. Most any time I need a team of horses, I can go down to Jim Webster and he will rent us a team of horses so we can go through the harvest.” The Blunk family “thought a lot of Jim Webster.”<sup>66</sup>

In July 1916, Jim and O. P. Soule agreed to incorporate their farming interests. They filed a Certificate of Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation of the Woodmansee & Webster Company. The organizational details of the company would remain the same. However the name was changed to the “Webster-Soule Farm.” The board of directors, and stockholders, were Jim, O. P. Soule, J. S. Webster, Elmo S. Webster, and Thomas Cook. The amount of stock held by each was not specified in the document.<sup>67</sup> One technical problem existed before



the new corporation was officially recognized by state law. The annual corporation tax which was required by the state had not been paid on the Woodmansee & Webster Company since 1913. The tax and accrued penalties had to be paid before the new name of the corporation would be official. This was done and "all the corporate rights which were enjoyed under the Constitution and laws of the State of Idaho, prior to the date of said forfeiture" were restored,<sup>68</sup> and the Webster-Soule Farm was in business. Jim was the president and manager. Soule was the secretary and attorney.

The farm continued to produce grains in abundance. To expand the acreage, George V. Harris leased three hundred and sixty acres to the Webster-Soule Farm in 1922. The lease price was about twenty-five hundred dollars per year.<sup>69</sup> Operating capital was obtained from the Continental Life Insurance Company.<sup>70</sup>

A recurring problem on the farm was fire. Because of dry conditions the grain or stubble would easily ignite. Even the hot exhaust pipe of a car or pickup could start a fire. Someone careless about extinguishing a cigarette often was the cause of a fire. One fire on the farm spread to some of the buildings and some farm records were destroyed.<sup>71</sup> On another occasion one of the combined harvesters mysteriously caught fire and was destroyed. A newspaper reporter noted that "Mr. Webster cannot account for the fire and thinks someone must have set fire to it."<sup>72</sup> A major blaze broke out late in August, 1928. The blaze was started by the "exhaust from a car that was passing a patch of stubble" and "ignited the dry stalks and started a blaze that soon spread almost beyond control" The blaze burned three hundred

bags of wheat along with eighty acres of standing wheat. Farm employees and neighbors worked to contain and extinguish the blaze.

The men, armed with shovels, formed a line and dug wide furrows between the blaze and the standing wheat, throwing dirt into the fire and beating it down with wet sacks. A water wagon nearby lent its aid. Many townspeople went up to give assistance. Four men were overcome by the heat and smoke and required first aid. They were Leon Davidson, whose injuries were so serious as to necessitate his being brought to the hospital, Ellis Davidson, Tom Harrison and Mr. Williams. All of them are now recovered.

The management of the ranch wishes to extend grateful thanks to neighbors, townspeople, and all others who so willingly helped to combat the flames and to express its appreciation for all offers of aid.<sup>73</sup>

Jim's sons increasingly took over running the farm, although they consulted often with him. This allowed Jim to increase his involvement in other pursuits.

Jim was in great demand because of his knowledge of dry farming techniques. On June 8, 1928, a group of officials from Montana State College toured the Webster-Soule farm. Jim showed them around and explained his "system of farming." The educators were impressed. Later that same year Jim was the discussion leader on dry farming at the Idaho State Seed Show held in the Rexburg Tabernacle.<sup>74</sup>

Jim was active in the Wheat Growers of Idaho. At a meeting in the Madison County Courthouse in January, 1930, he was "appointed permanent chairman" of the committee to assist in organizing wheat growers' co-ops. He extended his interest in the marketing aspect of wheat by associating with the Farmer's Federal Grain Marketing Association. The grain dealers from Southern Idaho and Utah joined



forces at a meeting in Ogden, Utah, and developed a regional division of the Association. The temporary headquarters was in Ogden. A temporary board of directors was established. Jim was appointed to the board. A subsequent meeting was held in Pocatello, Idaho. The board of directors decided to develop a permanent organization to help market the Utah-Southern Idaho grain crops. Articles of incorporation were drawn up. The name of the new association was the Intermountain Grain Growers, Inc. The affiliation with the Farmer's Federal Grain Marketing Association would be continued. An election was held to determine a president. Jim was elected.<sup>75</sup>

Jim, as president, had to deal with an immediate problem. There was some controversy over where to locate the regional office. After some protest from the Idaho farmers, the decision was made to locate the office in Ogden. The Idaho farmers favored Pocatello as being more centrally located, but the Utah grain growers won out.<sup>76</sup> Jim worked hard to see that the grain growers were favorably represented in the marketplace. He continued his involvement in the organization until he died, a decade later.

Jim's contribution to the technology of dry farming was substantial. Not only did he pioneer techniques, but he made available to others the knowledge he acquired. His leadership qualities were recognized in the many livestock and agricultural offices to which he was appointed or elected. Stockraising and agricultural technology were rapidly advanced in Idaho as a result of his efforts.



## Representative Webster

JAMES WHALEY WEBSTER was a Republican through and through. He was active in partisan politics on the local and state level, and knew many of the party who held national office.

When the Fremont County Republican Convention was held in Rigby, September 28, 1906, "there were several names suggested . . . for representatives but when it was put to a vote it was soon decided that J. W. Webster of Rexburg, E. M. Harris of Marysville, Jas. Fogg of St. Anthony and J. D. Killpack of Driggs were the choice ones and received a great majority of the votes cast." The men were all "well and favorably known throughout the county." They ranked among the "very best and most successful businessmen" of the area. "The interests of Fremont County" would be "ably taken care in the hands of such men."<sup>1</sup>

The Democratic Party had a difficult time getting anyone to agree to run for State Representative. Finally four men accepted: Wesley Gibson of Menan, Jesse M. Baker of Teton, Alf Ricks of Sugar and William L. Flint of Parker.<sup>2</sup> The campaign was low key. When the votes were counted after the general election in November, the Democrats were defeated as expected. The Republican slate of candidates won handily.<sup>3</sup>

When Representative Webster arrived in Boise he

checked into room thirty-four of the Idanha Hotel. The room had no phone service, but was otherwise very comfortable.<sup>4</sup> After arriving in Boise, he made only occasional trips back to Rexburg during the legislative session. When he did return to Rexburg it was on the "flyer" that arrived about 2:30 in the morning. He never forgot to buy a present for his youngest child, Lucille, who would be given it at the early hour.<sup>5</sup>

The ninth biennial session of the Legislature convened on Monday, January 7, 1907, in joint session to hear the message of Republican Governor Frank R. Gooding, who had been elected for a second term. His address focused on ex-Governor Frank Steunenberg who had been assassinated "by the explosion of an infernal machine at the gate" of his Caldwell home on December 30, 1905. The act was deplored as "being one of the most fiendish crimes in American history."<sup>6</sup>

The appointment of standing committees was the first order of business. Webster was appointed to the Ways and Means and the Agriculture and Livestock committees.<sup>7</sup>

In an effort to help the people of the state become acquainted with the legislators the *Idaho Daily Statesman* ran a column entitled "Gossip About Members of the Ninth Session." Representative Webster was mentioned three times:

Representative Webster of Fremont county is one of the shortest men in the present legislature. He has a reputation, however, of being an athlete in the days before prosperity brought him avoirdupois. Many years ago he and Joe Streng, one of the well known wool buyers of southern Idaho, were riding through the snowdrifts of a stormy December day, and the question of foot racing come up. Streng was the older man,

and he'd be dog-goned if he'd yield to any boy. The boy, however, was game. He dared Streng to try it on. Right then and there they stopped the team, tied them to a fence and marking off 100 yards of snowdrifts, shed their overcoats and mittens and had it out right there. Webster confesses that Streng came off winner by a foot, but he couldn't do it again on dry land, where he hadn't the advantage length gave him in climbing over the snowdrifts.

"The snow is costing us a lot of money, but we are glad to see it," said Representative Webster of Fremont county. "I am feeding \$150 worth of hay a day to my sheep, while Representative Johnson is feeding close to \$100 worth daily. It doesn't look like we'd get rich drawing \$5 a day from the state, does it?" Mr. Webster says that alfalfa hay is worth \$4 a ton with them, and he is feeding 35,000 head of sheep at that rate. Alfalfa is a good crop with them, though it yields about four tons per acre for the two cuttings. The altitude, approximately 5000 feet, is not quite so conducive to a big yield as the lower Snake River Valley. Mr. Webster says that for all the snow is expensive right now, it insures good feed and good crops for next summer, so they are not lamenting.

Representative Webster of Fremont county, is the oldest native Idahoan in the legislature — and one of the oldest natives of the state. He was born in Oneida county in 1862, when all northern Idaho was a howling wilderness, with no whites there save the feverish gold hunters in a few of the stampede camps. He was born the same year that Williams of Idaho county came to the state, but as Williams landed in Idaho county six months earlier in the year, Williams claims priority of citizenship.<sup>8</sup>

Webster was soon in the thick of the legislative process. He, and fellow Fremont Representative Killpack, introduced H. B.s No. 68 and 69. The Bills would amend sections 7048 and 7502 of the Revised Statutes of the State of Idaho. Bill No. 68 "defines grand larceny, making it the theft of goods worth \$40 or more, instead of \$60, as now, or the theft of any cow brute, horse or hog, or from the person. No. 69 extends the time for finding an indictment from one



year, as now on the statute books, to two years." A reporter for the *Idaho Daily Statesman* provided some background for the bills:

There is a bit of interesting history back of House bills No. 68 and 69, presented yesterday by Webster and Killpack.

Not so very long ago a Fremont county man lost a fine set of harness, which was taken from his barn. He searched for it high and low, but found no trace of it.

A little more than a year later, he found the harness in the possession of a neighbor, who seemed to be well up in the law. He confessed to having stolen the goods, but asked the original owner what he was going to do about it. The owner took a short cut for the county attorney to swear out a warrant. The attorney looked up the law, finding that an information could not be filed after a year had elapsed after the alleged theft. The owner had found the harness, the taker thereof had confessed, had shown the harness, but the law allowed only the one short year to file the complaint. As more than a year had elapsed, the law was powerless.

The news spread rapidly among the freemasonry of peripatetic thieves. The night the opinion was passed, three fine harnesses in the same locality were stolen. It was dead easy to steal a harness, hide it away for a year, and then flaunt it in the face of the original owner, who had no legal recourse.<sup>9</sup>

The bills passed the House but were defeated in the Senate.<sup>10</sup>

Webster and Killpack introduced H. B. No. 92, on February 1. It proposed amending an act relating to revenue which had been passed March 22, 1901. The act provided that all assessments for taxation must be completed by the second Monday in June and all taxpayers notified of their assessment.<sup>11</sup> The bill was referred to the Judiciary Committee and later reported out of committee with a do pass recommendation.<sup>12</sup> The bill passed the Senate with little discussion and was signed by the Governor.<sup>13</sup>

The entire Fremont County delegation sponsored

H. B. No. 119. It was for the issuance of state bonds to the amount of sixty-five thousand dollars for buildings and for the installation of a water system at the state industrial school in St. Anthony. The bonds were to be on one-thousand dollar denominations. They were to run for twenty years, although they could be redeemed in ten years in sums of two-thousand dollars or greater. The interest was to be four percent.<sup>14</sup> The bill met little opposition in the House or Senate and became law over the Governor's signature on March 8, 1907.<sup>15</sup>

Representative Webster was very concerned about the condition of the roads in the state, and especially those in Fremont County. He felt that County Commissioners should be held responsible for road conditions. Consequently he introduced H. B. No. 177 on February 19. The bill was

An Act making County Commissioners ex-officio Road Supervisors of their several Districts requiring personal visitation and inspection of the Public highways in said districts, giving said Commissioners authority and control over district road overseers and providing for special meetings to be held for considering road questions, and providing penalties for failure to perform their duties required in this Act.

After the bill was read,

Webster moved that the rules of the House be suspended, and that that portion of Section 15 of Article 3 of the Constitution requiring the reading of bills on three separate days be dispensed with, an emergency existing therefor, and that H. B. 177 be read first and second time by title, and referred to appropriate Committee. Seconded by Fogg.

The motion passed unanimously so the bill was read the first and second time by title and referred to committee.<sup>16</sup>

H. B. No. 177 was of such importance that it was



made a matter of special order and debated before the House as a Committee of the Whole. The bill, as summarized by the *Statesman*,

provides that the county commissioners shall be ex-officio road supervisors, and shall look over and be responsible for the roads, each commissioner in his own district.

James J. Mulalley of Latah County objected to the bill, in that it gave the commissioner the authority that belonged with the local overseers, and gave them arbitrary powers.

D. D. Shaw of Ada County made one amendment, that the commissioners should visit the roads in February, or as soon thereafter as practicable, instead of in May, as it first provided. The amendment was carried.

Mulalley said that one provision of the bill to fine county commissioners who neglected their road districts was unnecessary as they were already liable under their bond.

Webster showed that in his county the commissioners last year were in session but 17 days, for which they received \$500 each. The object of the bill was to give them a chance to earn their money and to penalize them if they neglected their duty.

Harry T. West of Cassia County believed that the whole bill, in that it prescribes new duties and a new procedure for individual commissioners as against the action of the whole board, was defective. It gave the commissioner, in his own district, a power which was not given him in the constitution.

Albert H. Conner of Shoshone County said that the system had been in practical operation in Shoshone county and had given them the best mountain roads in the state.

The bill was finally recommended for passage.<sup>17</sup>

The bill passed the Senate with little debate. It was signed by the Speaker of the House, J. Frank Hunt of Bannock County, and signed by Governor Gooding, March 15, 1907. County Commissioners thus became liable under threat of a fine of "not less than fifty dollars nor more than two hundred dollars" if they did not see that the roads in their district were maintained in good repair by the appointed overseers.<sup>18</sup> The measure made the county commissioners of the



state more responsible to their constituents. It was an important piece of legislation considering the increasing demands being made on the road systems by that new invention, the automobile.

Representative Webster voted with the majority on several important pieces of legislation. Fifty-thousand dollars was appropriated to help pay the expenses of the prosecution of the murderer of ex-Governor Frank Steunenberg. One-hundred dollars was appropriated and the adjutant-general was given the responsibility to see that a state flag was constructed. William E. Borah, with whom Webster was well acquainted, was elected United States Senator. Borah succeeded Fred T. Dubois, who was a most unpopular man in the Upper Snake River Valley because of his outspoken anti-Mormon oratory. A "Historical Society of Idaho Pioneers" was established and funded for thirty-five hundred dollars. It was to collect, preserve, and make available historical material concerning the state. It developed into the present Idaho Historical Society. Finally, a system of state fish hatcheries was established, under the supervision of the state game warden, and funded at fifteen thousand dollars.<sup>19</sup>

Representative Webster returned home at the end of the session. He had to be satisfied with his legislative activity. Certainly his constituents were satisfied and he was soon to be sent back to Boise for another term.

On September 25, 1908, the Republican convention was called to order in St. Anthony. The convention was harmonious. With little debate J. W. Webster, J. O. Webster, E. M. Harris, and Nathan Ricks were nominated as candidates for the Idaho House of Representatives.<sup>20</sup> The editor of the *Sugar City*

*Times* noted that Jim "is the man that 'does things.' The people of Fremont County should be proud of such an able man. He is a capable man and will do a great deal of good for the people of the state."<sup>21</sup> The editor of the *Rigby Star* noted that Jim "is so well qualified for the position, it is a foregone conclusion that he will be elected by a handsome majority."<sup>22</sup> His majority was two hundred and twenty votes.<sup>23</sup> He could now look forward to resuming his seat in the Idaho House when the Tenth Session convened in January, 1909.

Because of the legislative experience of Representative Webster, he was seriously considered for the position of Speaker of the House. He had a nucleus of fourteen supporters who touted him for the position. However, after careful consideration, he withdrew from the contest.<sup>24</sup>

The Tenth Session of the Idaho Legislature convened on January 4, 1909, in joint session. The newly elected Republican governor, James H. Brady, delivered his address. He focused on the need for the enactment of a direct primary law, increasing the regulatory powers of the bank commissioner, and legislation to encourage the mining interests. In addition, one of the most pressing matters of the session was the enactment of a local option law on prohibition.<sup>25</sup>

Representative Webster was involved in an attempt to establish a steering committee which would censor each piece of legislation before it would be voted out of committee. A caucus was called of Republican legislators. When the caucus was called to order by A. D. McKinley of Twin Falls, Webster immediately "moved that the chair be given the power to appoint a steering committee of five." Before a re-

sponse to the motion could be made, O. E. McCutcheon of Idaho Falls moved the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Charles H. Parsons of Grangeville. A standing vote was called for and all but five voted for the motion. McKinley evidently thought the adjournment would only be for a short period of time to allow more private discussion of Webster's motion. When he asked McCutcheon the length of time needed before reconvening the caucus, McCutcheon answered, "forever," and the attempt to create the steering committee failed.<sup>26</sup>

Webster introduced the first Resolution for consideration by the House. The Chief Clerk was to be "authorized and directed to make requisition on the Auditor of the State for the sum of \$10.00 for each member of the House, including the Chief Clerk, \$8.00 of which shall be in stamps and \$2.00 of which shall be in stamped wrappers, for their use during" the session. The Resolution carried with only one dissenting vote.<sup>27</sup>

Webster introduced one bill in conjunction with J. O. Webster. It was H. B. 202 "making it a felony to engage, instigate, promote, aid or encourage prize-fighting or contesting with or without gloves."<sup>28</sup> The bill failed.

Webster was the sole author of four bills which he introduced:

H. B. No. 212 — An Act making it a misdemeanor to conduct a restaurant or lunch counter or barber shop in connection with or on the same premises or building with any public pool or billiard hall or public bowling alley, and prescribing the penalty for the violation thereof.

H. B. No. 213 — An Act making it a misdemeanor for the proprietor of any public bowling alley or public billiard hall to allow minors between the age of five and twenty years to enter or frequent his place of business, and prescribing a penalty.



H. B. No. 240 — An Act to amend Section 2839 of the Revised Codes of Idaho, relating to appointment of commissioners to establish rates to be charged a person, company or corporation for furnishing water to the inhabitants of a city or town.

H. B. No. 259 — An Act to provide for the payment of a grazing license fee on sheep entering the State of Idaho from other states and territories and providing a penalty for the violation thereof.<sup>29</sup>

The first three bills were defeated, but the last one was enacted into law. H. B. No. 259 provided that:

Section 1. Any person, company or corporation attempting to bring, or causing to be brought, from any other State or Territory any sheep into the State of Idaho in any manner, except by shipping the same through the State by railroad train, shall, before crossing the State line, notify the State Live Stock Inspector of the district to be entered or the State Veterinary Surgeon, of such proposed action, which notice shall set forth the number of sheep, the brand thereon, the locality from which such sheep came and through which they have been driven, and accompanying such notice with a grazing fee equal to the sum of five cents (5¢) per head for the total number of sheep embraced within said notice. All fees so collected shall be placed in the State Treasury to the credit of the State Live Stock Sanitary Fund.

Sec. 2. Any person, company or corporation violating the provisions of this Act shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined in a sum not less than one hundred (\$100) not more than fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) together with the costs of prosecution.

Sec. 3. Whereas, an emergency exists thereof, this Act shall be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Governor.

Approved March 11, 1909.<sup>30</sup>

The editor of the *Rigby Star* visited Boise and the legislature. He was impressed with the work of the Fremont County legislators. There is "no reason to be ashamed" of the delegation from Fremont County, he said. J. W. Webster, along with the others, was doing his "duty conscientiously and

well.”<sup>31</sup> There had been some controversy about the railroad providing passes for the legislators from Southeast Idaho to travel to Boise. In fact, a Resolution had been introduced that would not allow reimbursement for mileage if transportation was provided by the railroad at no cost. Webster opposed the Resolution. The editor supported Webster’s vote and noted that “it is no one’s business how a member of the legislature reached his post of duty, whether he walks, flies, rides a mule, or takes advantage of a railroad pass, in order to reach his post of duty.”<sup>32</sup>

The Tenth legislature adjourned on March 7th. After the House adjourned, at about 5:00 p.m., immediately there was pandemonium. The members of the House began to play tricks on each other, throw things at each other, grapple with one another, and generally have a good time. “The fray ended in the collection of keepsakes to commemorate the occasion. There was no significance in the excitement and confusion, except a general relaxation after several long nights of arduous labor, and after a session which had been the most important in the history of the state.”<sup>33</sup>

During the Tenth legislative session money was appropriated to send an exhibit to the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, being held in Seattle, Washington. Also a school for the blind, deaf and dumb was established at Gooding. Appropriations were made for state agencies, the building of bridges, and the purchase of some land from the Coeur d’Alene Indian Reservation. The two most important laws enacted during the session were the local option on prohibition act and the direct primary law.<sup>34</sup> Representative Webster voted for the local option bill but against the direct primary law.<sup>35</sup>

The direct primary law provided that all county and state officers be nominated at a primary election rather than at party conventions. Several problems developed after the law was passed. It was very difficult for an individual of small income to run because of the expense involved if an election was contested or the expense in the campaign process. Opposition began to build throughout the state to the law and it was repealed in 1919, although the direct primary continued as part of the county political process.<sup>36</sup>

Jim continued his involvement in local and state politics. He was to serve a term as county commissioner from 1916–1918, and as a state Senator from 1928–1930.



## Mayor Webster

“CITIZENS NAME STRONG TICKET,” proclaimed the headline of the March 21, 1907, issue of the *Current-Journal*. On March 18, “a large representation of the citizens of Rexburg had gathered in mass meeting at the Commercial Club hall.” Forty-five of the “leading citizens” of the city had issued a call for a meeting for the “purpose of nominating an independent ticket for the coming city election.” A nominating committee and a resolutions committee were appointed by the chairman, police judge D. Osborn. After an adjournment of a few hours the meeting was again called to order to hear, and act upon, the committee reports. The resolutions committee first announced the platform upon which the candidates would run:

We, the citizens of Rexburg, in mass meeting assembled, do hereby pledge the candidates of this body to labor for the accomplishment of the following improvements in the condition of our city, looking to its future and further progress and welfare:

1. That our candidates use every effort to extend the water works system to the residence portion of the city as soon as possible, so that all the citizens may receive the benefits of the bonds that have been voted for this improvement.

2. That we favor the erection of a City Hall as soon as possible, where the city records can be kept, and suitable rooms provided for the transaction of the city’s business. We pledge our candidates to undertake this work immediately, by creating an improvement fund that shall be used for that purpose.

3. That until the records of the city can be deposited in a permanent vault in the City Hall, we are in favor of suitable accommodations being secured for this purpose.

4. That steps be taken to beautify and improve the appearance of the city park and cemetery by the planting of trees and shrubs.

5. That it be the aim of the council to do all that can be done consistently with the means at hand to grade and improve the streets of the city.

6. That we feel to endorse the action of the last State Legislature with regard to the measures passed by them relating to the liquor traffic, and pledge the incoming city council to amend the ordinances of the city to comply with the provisions of said new legislation.

7. That the incoming city council shall take steps for further extension of our sidewalk system, and that in those districts, where the travel is such as to justify it, the council, in the absence of any petition from property owners, proceed as the law contemplates, and order the laying of such sidewalk.

8. That immediate steps be taken for the removal of the electric light poles from the center of main street to the sidewalk line.

9. That the ordinances looking to the sanitary improvements of the city be rigidly enforced, that our present healthy condition may continue.

The nominating committee then placed the following ticket before the people: "For mayor, James W. Webster. For treasurer, A. M. Carbine. For police judge, D. Osborn. For councilmen First Ward Eli McEntire and Silas Smith. From Second Ward W. W. Stephens. Third Ward H. J. Flamm, Cris Jensen." The platform and nominations were "unanimously adopted."<sup>1</sup>

The nominating committee became the campaign committee. It was led by Charles H. Woodmansee and Nathan Ricks. The campaigning was totally successful, as the entire ticket was elected on April 2. "Now that we have shown either by our silence or by

our vote that the new officials are our choice," wrote the editor of the *Current-Journal*, "let us boost and encourage them in their work and not be eternally knocking and kicking at what is being done for the best interests of the town."<sup>2</sup>

The new mayor and city council met for the first time on Monday, April 15, and repeated the oath of office administered by the clerk. A change in the council was necessitated by the fact that W. W. Stephens had been appointed postmaster, and became ineligible to hold an elective office. Mayor Webster purposed that T. J. Winter take Stephens' place as a councilman from the Second Ward. John H. Squires, hold-over councilman from the Second Ward, felt that he should be allowed to suggest a name. He nominated Steve Hunt. A vote was taken and the mayor suffered his first defeat. Hunt was elected to the vacant position by a vote of three to two. The mayor then sought the appointment of Newel K. Whitney as Chief of Police and James H. Wallis as attorney. There was some controversy over the appointment of Whitney and a motion was made to carry the appointments over until the next meeting. On Wednesday the council met again. Hunt took the oath of office, and Wallis was confirmed as attorney. However a decision could not yet be reached on Whitney. It was obvious that there was "considerable opposition to his name among the council."<sup>3</sup> The outcome was another defeat for the mayor. B. M. Larsen, the current Chief of Police, was retained.

At the council meeting held Monday, May 20, a major concern was handled. A committee had been appointed to seek better quarters for the city hall. The committee reported that "they could get rooms under the First National Bank." They would lease



the rooms for two years at fifteen dollars per month. The council voted to proceed with the arrangement. The editor of the *Current-Journal* denounced the decision. He reminded the mayor and councilmen that they had been elected on a platform of a new city hall. He said plans should be immediately developed and a special tax levied. "Our school and church buildings are as fine as can be found anywhere," he said, "and a city hall should be erected that will correspond with them." He pointed out that a new building would "impress young people with the importance of our town government." A new city hall, he said, "would make everybody feel that the government of the city was of as much consequence as anything else in the city. We are not in favor of the city renting a basement to do business in," he concluded. "Our city government is too important for that. A City Hall should be built as soon as possible."<sup>4</sup> Despite the editorial the council proceeded to lease the rooms from the First National Bank, and remained there until a new city hall was eventually completed.

Mayor Webster had the delightful task of welcoming a "frolicsome" group of "Salt Lake businessmen" to Rexburg. They were met at the train depot and escorted in carriages, led by a band, around the city then to the Commercial Club building for lunch. Charles H. Woodmansee, president of the Commercial Club, was the master of ceremonies. He introduced Mayor Webster who presented the keys of the city to the visiting businessmen, then addressed them. He talked about the city and said that the "population today is just 3,000." But he optimistically "predicted that within the next decade Rexburg would be a lively city of 10,000 population. He asked

the cooperation of the Salt Lakers in the future development" of the city. Especially, he continued, "in the matters of better freight rates, transportation facilities and passenger rates." The meeting concluded with Councilman T. R. Black, representing the Mayor of Salt Lake City, inviting the "Rexburgers to come to Salt Lake early and often, and assured them they could own the city."<sup>5</sup>

Most of the business of the city was routine. The council meetings were held to receive the reports of the Finance Committee, Printing Committee, City Estraypound Keeper, Chief of Police, Waterworks Committee, etc. The improvement of roads, water services, electrical services, sewer system, cemetery grounds, sidewalks, approval of taxes, accepting bids on various projects, and issuance of commercial licenses, were all part of the routine.

Occasionally something out of the ordinary was requested. Evidently the dances at the Third Ward church were getting a little out of hand. Bishop Hyrum Ricks petitioned Mayor Webster and the council, "asking that Daniel Ricks be appointed special police with power to act as peace officer" at the dances. The request was granted with the stipulations that there would be no expense to the city, and Daniel Ricks would act under the direction of Chief B. M. Larson.<sup>6</sup>

A petition was presented to the city fathers asking the "council to prohibit the sale of liquor in Rexburg at the expiration of the present licenses." The petition was signed by four hundred and fifty-five voters, or about eighty-five percent of the voters in the city limits. The arguments against accepting the petition were that prohibition should be passed by the state legislature rather than a city council; fifteen percent



of the voters should have the opportunity to be heard; city revenues would be adversely effected; and more time to deliberate the questions was needed. The vote was three to two against the petition. The Mayor did not express himself on the question, but his stand was known because of his action in the state legislature. The question of prohibition was one that would be publically debated for the next several years.<sup>7</sup>

An Eastern Idaho Press Club meeting was held in Rexburg, June 22, 1908. Twenty-one newspapers were represented by their editors. The Commercial Club of the city hosted a banquet for the visiting newspapermen. Mayor Webster was introduced by James H. Wallis, editor of the *Rexburg Standard*, and welcomed the delegates:

Gentlemen of the Eastern Idaho Press Club: In behalf of the good people of Rexburg, I greet you, and bid you welcome to our prosperous community. We are glad to have you in our midst, and we deliver to you the keys of the city, extending to you every freedom that is ours to give. We thoroughly appreciate the importance of your visit to our country and can readily realize that it will result in good to us, knowing as we do that you can not help but be loud in your praises of our glorious country and the good people who inhabit it. We want you to sing the praises of our broad streets, our substantial rock and brick buildings, our cozy and palatial residences, our temple of learning on yonder hill — the Ricks Academy, our cut rock district schools, where as fine a corps of pedagogues, as can be found anywhere, teach 600 bright minds how to shoot. We have a system of water works costing \$30,000 whose equal is not found in the state, the water of which has been secured after digging through 800 feet of solid lava rock, flowing at the rate of 350 gallons per minute. We want you to tell of our thousands of bushels of as fine, clean and plump grain as ever found its way into any granary. We want to tell you gentlemen that Rexburg has a glorious future. . . . We want to continue the good will of Idaho towards us.<sup>8</sup>



The Mayor had every right to tout Rexburg and the area as he had been closely involved with the development of every phase of the community, and was justly proud.

An interesting request came before the mayor and city council when Bishop James M. Cook of the Second Ward asked that "ecclesiastical officers be allowed free use of water at stated times on the meeting house premises." This created some discussion on the separation of church and state. If one ward was allowed free use of the water then all churches and schools should have the same privilege. The "legality of such a proceeding" was questioned, and the request was denied.<sup>9</sup>

In the interest of good public relations, Mayor Webster agreed to allow his lawn to be used for the "merrymakers" of the Stake Mutual Improvement Association carnival. The carnival ran for three nights with "electrical displays, all kinds of booths, and general entertainment," including instrumental music, songs, comic speeches, and recitations.<sup>10</sup>

While Mayor Webster was still completing his term in office he was nominated to run again for the office of State Representative at the Republican county convention held in St. Anthony, September 25, 1908.<sup>11</sup> From that time until the election on November 3, the mayor was busy campaigning. He was reelected with a four hundred eleven vote plurality.

Mayor Webster took his seat in the House of Representatives on January 4, 1909, and was away from Rexburg, except for occasional visits, until March. The city council was presided over by the president, J. H. Squires.

While Mayor Webster was away the most impor-

tant matter handled by the council was awarding a contract to W. D. Mahan to construct a new city hall. The bid was for \$1,643.85.<sup>12</sup>

On April 29, 1909, political factions met to nominate their tickets for local offices. The "People's" ticket nominated John H. Squires for mayor while the "Citizens" ticket nominated Thomas E. Ricks. Ricks was elected.<sup>13</sup>

Mayor Webster was present at what should have been his last meeting as mayor on April 20. After routine business was completed the time came for the new mayor and council to be installed. At that point, P. O. Thompson stood forth and "entered a protest in behalf of himself and other citizens, whom he said were heavy taxpayers, against the official canvas of the votes on the grounds that the recent election was illegal and that no one had been legally elected." He, and his attorney, pointed out that the method of "registration and voting had both been in violation of state law and that therefore all acts of officers so elected and installed would be invalid." The city attorney needed time to respond, so the council adjourned and Mayor Webster was still in office.<sup>14</sup>

The People's and Citizen's parties argued about the problem with feelings dividing the community. It reached the point where everybody was "disgusted with the whole affair." Each side blamed the other for the situation. It reached the point where the "topic of conversation on the street corners and business houses" was which faction was getting the better of the other.<sup>15</sup>

While the squabble continued, the mayor and council continued to meet to handle routine business. While they were still in office the street light-

ing in the city was changed from a "single arc light at each crossing on Main" to twelve incandescent lights to the block, "distributed in pairs on each side of the street. The poles are all removed from the center of the street and Main in Rexburg is now like a splendid boulevard, all glittering at night."<sup>16</sup>

The mayor took time from his affairs to occasionally relax with friends:

Mayor J. W. Webster, Attorney I. J. Stewart, H. J. Flamm and Ed. Dewsnup made an auto trip into the hills southeast of town on Tuesday. The trip was made in Henry J. Flamm's new car, the Princess, and was much enjoyed and full of adventure and they all have great experiences to relate. Considering the up grade and rough road they passed the trip was a remarkable test of efficiency for the machine and made a record for autoing in these parts.<sup>17</sup>

On July 14, the lawyers for the People's and Citizen's Parties presented their arguments before Judge Stevens at St. Anthony. A protracted legal fight was not necessary as a common agreement was reached that if the Citizens' Party officials would agree to maintain the current police chief and water engineer, and that the wishes of a local option election on prohibition be followed, then the People's Party would not stand in the way any longer. At the council meeting that night in Rexburg the new mayor and city council were administered the oath of office.<sup>18</sup> Mayor Webster was out of a job in city politics, but certainly not out of politics. He could look back with satisfaction on his tenure as the major aspects of the party platform on which he had been elected had been completed or were in stages of completion.



## Commissioner Webster

ON November 10, 1916, the Madison County Commission met to canvas the votes of the recent election.<sup>1</sup> The results of the election were certified correct, and James Whaley Webster was officially to become a member of the new County Commission which would be installed in January, 1917.

Jim had accepted the Republican Party nomination for County Commissioner from District No. 1.<sup>2</sup> His Democratic Party opponent was Jesse M. Baker.<sup>3</sup> The campaign had been low key, and when the votes were counted, Jim had defeated Baker by one hundred and seventy-four votes out of two thousand, four hundred and sixty cast.<sup>4</sup>

On January 8, 1917, the new County Commissioners, Alfred Ricks, John Taylor, and James Whaley Webster, were administered the oath of office by the county clerk. "As soon as the officials were sworn in they commenced at once to do business."<sup>5</sup> Commissioner Webster immediately moved that Alfred Ricks be chairman. Ricks seconded the motion. Naturally both Webster and Ricks voted for the motion. Taylor voted against. The motion carried by a two-thirds majority, and Ricks was "duly elected chairman."<sup>6</sup>

For their labors during the next two years, the commissioners would receive twenty-five dollars per month.<sup>7</sup>

The Bannock Jim Slough was to present an im-

mediate problem for the commissioners. The Slough ran close to the Snake River. The possibility existed that the Snake River would cut "through from its main channel" into the Slough. To prevent the damage to the farm land this would create, Jim moved that a dam be built on the Slough. The motion carried. Also, Jim moved that the work be contracted to Roman Siepert for ten cents per yard of fill dirt. This motion also carried.<sup>8</sup> After the work was completed, Siepert tried to get more than the ten cents per yard. But the commissioners were unanimous in their decision to pay only the contract amount.<sup>9</sup>

Several physicians desired to work for the county. After reviewing the credentials of each one, the commissioners, on motion of Jim, appointed Dr. Joseph Walker as County Physician. He would receive an annual salary of three hundred and fifty dollars. Additionally he was appointed County Health Officer at a salary of fifty dollars a year. He was required to pay all his travel, lodging, and board expenses out of his annual salary.<sup>10</sup> Dr. Walker agreed to the terms and received his official appointment on April 28, 1917.<sup>11</sup>

On motion of Commissioner Webster, which was seconded and carried, the *Rexburg Standard* was to be engaged to do the county printing. The contract would be for four hundred dollars per year, and was to include all printing required by the county, except printing the official ballots for elections. The management of the newspaper agreed to the terms and the contract was concluded.<sup>12</sup>

On July 6, 1917, a representative of the Utah Power and Light Company met with the commission and presented an application for "an electric light, heat and power franchise" in Rexburg. After careful



consideration of the application, John Taylor moved, Jim seconded, that the Utah Power and Light request be adopted. Alfred Ricks joined the other two in unanimous approval.<sup>13</sup> Soon the company was the largest supplier of electrical services in the county.

Commissioner Webster could interrupt his busy schedule as a Commissioner, farmer, businessman, to celebrate Thanksgiving with "all his family." The occasion was more than a family reunion. His family had congregated to pay tribute to him on his birthday. He was fifty-five on November 29, 1917. The editor of a local paper noted the occasion: "Mr. Webster has been a resident of our county a long time and has done much for the up-building of the community. He has," continued the editor, "served the public in many capacities and is now serving as county commissioner. The affair was held at the home of his son James, which is one of the most beautiful homes in our city. It was erected this summer and is a credit to any city."<sup>14</sup>

Shortly after the beginning of the new year the commissioner took his wife on a vacation to the California coast. While they were there, he took every opportunity to visit county offices and "looked into a great many matters concerning county government, especially the making of roads."<sup>15</sup>

After the Websters returned from California Jim became involved in a discussion of telephones. As the use of telephones became more widespread, a discussion developed concerning the possibility of the county paying for the telephones in county officials residences. After all, much county business was conducted over the telephones, and perhaps the commissioners should be willing to budget for the phones. After some debate, Jim moved that the



“County do not pay for any residence telephones for any of the County Officers.” The motion was seconded and passed.<sup>16</sup>

One theme that went through Commissioner Webster’s term was the World War being fought in Europe. The citizens of Madison County had contributed seventy thousand dollars to the war effort by subscribing to Liberty Bonds.<sup>17</sup> The commissioners set a patriotic example by giving of their resources. Additionally, they participated in the rationing of various commodities. War gardens were raised, thrift stamps were issued, meatless Tuesdays and wheatless Wednesdays were observed. The Adjutant General of the United States, Enock Crowder, issued orders that all citizens were to fight or work. President Woodrow Wilson and Idaho’s Governor Moses Alexander issued proclamations calling for an increase in farm production to feed the American fighting men, and their allies, in Europe. The citizens of Madison County responded enthusiastically to each demand for money, labor, commodities, or fighting men, to bolster the war effort. The commission appropriated two hundred and fifty dollars to defray the expenses of the County Council of Defense, which was headed by Nathan Ricks.<sup>18</sup>

During the latter days of the war, attention was briefly diverted by politics. Commissioner Webster had decided not to run for reelection.<sup>19</sup> Shortly after the general election, held in November, the war was ended. The Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. None could argue with the headlines of a local paper: “Glorious Victory.”<sup>20</sup>

The term for the commissioners was drawing to a close. Perhaps the most significant act of the commission took place on December 16, 1918. Commis-

sioner Webster moved, Ricks seconded, the following:

It appearing to the Board that Madison County, Idaho is without a County Court House and Jail, or any site upon which to erect a County Court House and Jail:

It is therefore Ordered that the following described tract of land, to wit:

Commencing at the southeast corner of Block Thirty-four in the City of Rexburg, Idaho, as per the official plat thereof and running thence West seven rods, thence North nine rods, thence East seven rods, thence South nine rods to the place of beginning.

Be purchased as a site for a County Court House and Jail, at a price of not to exceed \$5325.00 Dollars, the purchase price to be paid out of any available funds belonging to Madison County upon the execution and delivery by the owners thereof of a good and sufficient deed or deeds of conveyance, and free from all encumbrances.

Dated at Rexburg, Idaho this 16th day of December, 1918. Commissioner Taylor made the act unanimous. The present courthouse is on the site purchased. Commissioner Webster made a motion that the County Commission adjourn for the term. This motion also carried unanimously.<sup>21</sup>

On January 13, 1919, the new County Commissioners were sworn in and Commissioner Webster ended his tenure as an elected county official.<sup>22</sup> He had been recently appointed a member of the executive committee of the county Republican Party, and continued active in the political affairs of the county and state.<sup>23</sup>

## Senator Webster

THE membership of the Madison County Republican Party unanimously nominated James Whaley Webster to be their standard bearer to seek the office of State Senator in June, 1928. He had no primary opposition. The Republican Party garnered most of the primary votes, which must have caused concern among the Democrats.<sup>1</sup>

The county Republican delegates met at the courthouse and elected Jim, among others, to be a delegate to the state convention to be held in Kellogg on August 28th. Jim spoke at the meeting in behalf of local, state, and national nominees. "An overwhelming victory" was predicted. Each Republican present "pledged himself to support the organization in the coming election."<sup>2</sup>

Jim attended the convention in Kellogg. He stood with the majority in nominating H. C. Baldrige of Parma for Governor, John Thomas of Gooding for United States Senator, Burton L. French of Moscow and Addison T. Smith of Twin Falls for Congressmen.<sup>3</sup>

Jim returned to Rexburg and participated in the establishment of the Republican headquarters in the "C. W. & M. building." The headquarters were "beautifully arranged." A "large radio" was installed. In addition, "large quantities of campaign material" was available "dealing with the farm situation, the



liquor question, taxation, tariff, and other material” that instructed and interested the people.<sup>4</sup>

The campaign heated up with a series of Republican rallies being held in Rexburg and surrounding communities.<sup>5</sup> Jim was the featured speaker at a meeting of the Hoover-Curtis<sup>6</sup> Young Men’s Club held at the Idamont Hotel.<sup>7</sup> His campaign was bolstered by a biographical sketch appearing in a local newspaper on November 1:

Mr. Webster was born in the pioneer town of Idaho, Franklin, on November 29, 1862. He has been a resident of Madison County for 34 years. Since coming to Madison County he has been engaged in sheep raising and farming. Mr. Webster has the largest dry farm in the state of Idaho and is classed as the greatest and best farmer in the intermountain west by such men as Dr. John A. Widtsoe, President E. G. Peterson of the Utah Agricultural college, and President Frank Harris of the Brigham Young University. Mr. Webster is an authority on dry farming. He is one of the largest taxpayers in Idaho, and if elected would surely look out for the expenditure of the taxpayers dollars. He has served in the Idaho legislature and as Mayor of Rexburg and was a member of the Idaho Livestock Sanitary board, in which he made a record that is unsurpassed.

If elected, Mr. Webster will continue to work for the best interests of the people of Madison County.<sup>8</sup>

The general election, held November 7, showed a strong Republican trend on the local, state and national levels. The apparent prosperity of the 1920s was a big factor in the Republican showing. The race for Madison County state Senator, between Jim and L. Y. Rigby, turned out to be very close. Jim won by only fifty-one votes out of over twenty-nine hundred cast.<sup>9</sup>

Before the newly elected Senator left for Boise he invited his constituents to meet with him and discuss desired legislation to be considered by the coming

session of the legislature.<sup>10</sup> Jim was very concerned that the wishes of the people be expressed so he could effectively represent them.

Senator Webster opened his senatorial career by making a motion that a resolution eulogizing former Madison County Senator Nathan Ricks be adopted. The motion was seconded and carried.<sup>11</sup>

Senator Webster was placed on the following committees: Finance; Highways, Bridges, and Ferries; Irrigation and Water Resources; and Public Lands.<sup>12</sup>

During the course of the session, Senator Webster introduced five bills either solely or in conjunction with other Senators. The first one, Senate Bill No. 90, made it through the Senate and House but was vetoed by the governor. The bill was "Entitled, 'An Act amending Section 502 of Chapter 28 of the Idaho Compiled Statutes relating to the qualifications of voters, by providing a property qualification for voters at all bond elections.'" <sup>13</sup> Governor Baldrige indicated in his veto message that although he was "not disinclined to tighten the restrictions as to qualifications for voters at bond elections," his view was that the bill would "not successfully accomplish the object sought." Therefore, he continued, "I withhold my approval of Senate Bill No. 90."<sup>14</sup>

Senator Webster was one of twenty-five Senators to introduce Senate Bill No. 93. The bill would prohibit the "advertisement of cigarettes and all forms of tobacco on billboards or other devices and making the violation thereof a misdemeanor." The bill was referred to the State Affairs Committee. It was reported out of committee without recommendation that it pass. An unsuccessful attempt was made to table the bill.<sup>15</sup> The bill was finally passed without



much debate. When the bill was transmitted to the House it ran into difficulty. The House "sang 'The Wreck of Old 93,' " as it "merrily kicked the senate's pet measure forbidding advertising of tobacco on billboards into the hereafter." One representative spoke for passage: "Are we not going to stop this cluttering up of our landscape with these disgraceful things?" he queried. "Isn't it a terrible thing for children coming from school to view the picture of a beautiful woman walking a mile, or even farther?" Despite the plea, the House voted to indefinitely postpone the bill.<sup>16</sup>

The next bill Senator Webster introduced was Senate Bill No. 96. It would provide "for the licensing of advertisements upon real property." However, after some consideration, Senator Webster asked for "unanimous consent to withdraw" the bill. The request was granted.<sup>17</sup>

Senator Webster next introduced Senate Bill No. 106 which would provide "for the appraisement of real property of a county prior to sale thereof." The bill was transmitted to the State Affairs Committee which subsequently reported it out without recommendation and it was defeated.<sup>18</sup>

The last bill introduced by Senator Webster was Senate Bill No. 121. This bill related to the "owning, operating, or having possession of any still, contrivance, device, utensil, or material used, designed or intended for the unlawful manufacture of intoxicating liquor, and providing penalties for the violation thereof." After considering that adequate laws to regulate prohibition already were part of the Idaho Code, Senator Webster "asked for unanimous consent to withdraw Senate Bill No. 121." The consent was granted.<sup>19</sup>



After the session was concluded Senator Webster returned home. Despite the fact the bills he introduced were all defeated, withdrawn, or vetoed, he was an important, respected member of the Senate. "To Senator Webster can be credited the stopping of a number of bills that would have increased taxes on those already paying heavy taxes. The legislature failed to do anything else in the matter of reducing taxes on farms and other real estate. So it is fortunate no new levies were allowed or additional bonds authorized."<sup>20</sup>

Senator Webster found himself back in the Senate chamber early in 1930. Governor Baldrige issued a proclamation instructing the members of the Twentieth Session to convene in Extraordinary Session on Monday, February 24, 1930.

At precisely the appointed hour, twelve o'clock noon on February 24, the "members of the Senate convened in the Senate Chamber in the Capitol building in the City of Boise, with President Pro Tempore John McMurray presiding." The Senate Secretary, Carl C. Kitchen read the proclamation which had been issued to convene the session. The reasons for the session were clearly set forth:

First: Increase of the excise tax on motor fuels.

Second: Authorization of the borrowing of not to exceed one million dollars, for the use of the state highway fund, to be repaid from anticipated revenue from the excise tax upon motor fuels.

The Senate and House met in joint session to hear the message of the governor. He pointed out that about one million dollars in additional federal highway funds could be made available to the state providing the amount be matched by state funds. The matching funds could be raised by increasing the

gasoline tax from four to five cents. This one cent increase would raise one million dollars over a period of five years. Thus gasoline tax anticipation notes for one million dollars could be issued and the federal funds for road building would become available and the "continued development of our highway system during 1930" would be assured.

The Highways, Bridges, and Ferries Committee, of which Senator Webster was a member, introduced Senate Bill No. 1. This bill provided the necessary authority to issue tax anticipation notes. The bill quickly passed through the legislative process and was signed by the governor.<sup>21</sup>

Senator Webster returned home. He soon began seriously considering running for another term in the Senate. By July he had consolidated his support in the Republican Party. He was nominated to be the senatorial standard bearer. He had no opposition in the primary election.<sup>22</sup>

Jim ran against George A. Hoopes, the Democratic Party candidate in the general election. Just as 1928 had been a Republican year, 1930 was a Democratic year. The nation was experiencing the early stages of what was to become the worst depression in its history. The national Republican administration was being blamed for the depression. This had its effect on state and local politics. When the votes were counted after the November 6th election, Hoopes had defeated Webster by fifty-four votes out of over twenty-seven hundred cast.<sup>23</sup> The closeness of the vote indicated that Jim had a lot of support. The defeat was very disappointing to him. He had served his constituents and the state well, and could be proud of that. He remained active in Republican Party affairs, but did not run again for public office.

## Businessman Webster

SHORTLY after Jim and Mary moved to Rexburg, Jim began investing in the development of local businesses. In January, 1898, he bought stock in the Fremont County Journal Publishing Company, Limited. In 1899, he bought one hundred dollars worth of stock in the Rexburg Creamery Company, Limited. In 1902, he bought one hundred shares of stock, worth one thousand dollars, in the Rexburg Produce and Meat Company.<sup>1</sup>

Early in 1902, a meeting of the farmers who irrigated from the Lyman Irrigation Canal was held in Lyman, a settlement a few miles south of Rexburg. The business of the meeting centered around the necessity to increase the amount of water available for irrigation purposes. New land was being opened and a greater volume of water was needed. The decision was reached that the head of the Lyman Irrigation Canal needed to be enlarged. However a greater number of people had to agree to fund the canal than those who presently were using the water. A company was organized, and subsequently incorporated. It was named the Consolidated Feeder Canal Company. A feeder canal, which was to be fifty feet wide at the bottom, was to be built "from the South Fork of the Snake River through west Rexburg and on to Burton." To build the canal a contract was let to James W. Webster and Charles W. Woodmansee. The



contract price was twenty thousand dollars. The contractors were to be paid from subscriptions by irrigators who then became stockholders in the company. As the work progressed, several stockholders became skeptical about the canal and began selling their stock. This served to discourage other stockholders who likewise sold their stock. "Finally only the Sunnydell, and Lyman stockholders remained. Upon their shoulders rested the burden of paying off the contract . . . in order to save their water rights." Jim and Charles undoubtedly began to wonder if they would get paid. However, money was raised by the remaining stockholders by mortgaging their farms, and the contractors were paid. A new company was "formed at this time and bonded to pay back the money borrowed from the stockholders." It was named the Sunnydell Irrigation Company. The money was eventually paid back and the canal constructed by Jim and Charles still carries water through Sunnydell, Archer and Lyman.<sup>2</sup>

On December 24, 1903, James W. and Mary Webster signed a Quit Claim Deed conveying to Agnes C. Winter, for the sum of one dollar, property in downtown Rexburg. On the same day, Agnes C. Winter and her husband, Timothy J. Winter, conveyed part of the property, by Quit Claim Deed, to the "Rexburg Drug Company, Limited."<sup>3</sup> The Rexburg Drug Company had been incorporated April 1, 1903.<sup>4</sup> The Websters' and Winters' were the principal organizers. Jim maintained half interest in the business for many years. An article in the *Rexburg Standard*, December 1915, stated that:

The store has a well founded reliable reputation. The prescription service is given the most thorough consideration. The fountain with the various drinks according to season is very

popular and the Rexall remedies have made the store distinctive as a well stocked establishment. Recently more room has been added to the drug store part which makes them better able than before to give service to their many customers. The men back of this institution are the most reliable and the best in our entire country. The Rexburg Drug corner is really a busy corner, the most centrally located in the town and the efficiency of the drug store makes it popular.<sup>5</sup>

By 1904, Jim had become involved in leadership positions of several businesses. He was a member of the board of directors of the Snake River Electric Light and Power Company, Limited, holding fifty-one hundred shares of stock worth fifty-one hundred dollars.<sup>6</sup> In addition he was president of the Rexburg Drug Company, the Rexburg Milling Company (He was to sell his interest to Timothy J. Winter.<sup>7</sup>), and the Thomas Clothing Company. He was the vice-president of the Rexburg Produce Company. "It speaks well for the executive ability, judgment and wise discrimination of Mr. Webster," noted one editor, "when we realize that he started in business but ten short years ago with a mere nominal capital, which his shrewd manipulation of the stock possibilities of this portion of the state has increased to financial independence, not one dollar of his wealth having come to him in any other manner than through legitimate business channels."<sup>8</sup>

One avenue for the investment of funds was the banking industry. The small town bankers "were boosters and builders of towns. And their own fortunes were enhanced as the town grew."<sup>9</sup> In 1904, Jim became involved in the establishment of a bank in Rexburg. The Rexburg Banking Company was organized. An application for a national charter was approved. The bank was named the First National



Bank of Rexburg. Ross J. Comstock, who had recently come to Rexburg from Missouri, was the cashier. The president was Charles H. Woodmansee. The vice-president was James W. Webster. The bank extended credit on homes and for farming purposes.<sup>10</sup> By 1908, the bank was "capitalized at \$50,000 with a surplus of \$10,000." Charles and Jim were still the executive officers. The editor of the *Sugar City Times* noted that "at the head of this splendid institution are Rexburg capitalists pure and simple. Men handling the destinies of the bank made their money in the community and they naturally take great pride in the conduct of the banks affairs." He added that "Mr. Webster is . . . patriotic when it comes to doing things which will accrue to the best interests of the city."<sup>11</sup>

During 1905 and 1906, Jim continued to invest his money in a variety of enterprizes. He bought thirteen shares of stock, worth thirteen hundred dollars, in the Henry Flamm Company, Limited. Additionally he became a director of the Snake River Valley Mutual Investment Company, holding one hundred shares of stock worth one hundred dollars. He was also on the board of directors of the Rexburg Standard Publishing Company, owning fifty shares of stock worth five hundred dollars.<sup>12</sup>

The Farmers and Merchants Bank, incorporated January 15, 1915, opened its doors for business on September 20, 1915. The bank had over fifty thousand dollars in deposits. John C. Cutler, president of the Deseret National Bank of Salt Lake City, was the president of the Rexburg bank. There were three vice-presidents: "Nathan Ricks, Alfred Ricks and J. W. Webster." They were "all men of financial standing in the community and successful in every



undertaking they have made.” In fact, “when the question of sound financial institutions is raised in Idaho, the state cannot boast of a stronger or better set of men as those back of this institution.” Jim owned forty shares of stock valued at four thousand dollars.<sup>13</sup> The bank was located in a corner of the C. W. & M. (Consolidated Wagon & Machine Company) building. The cashier was W. E. Gee, who had formerly been associated with the Madison Abstract Company.<sup>14</sup> The bank prospered, and by 1918, a depository bond in the amount of seventy-five thousand dollars was approved by the county commission.<sup>15</sup>

The war years brought prosperity to the Rexburg banks. Large sums of money was loaned to farmers to increase their production by buying more land or clearing land already owned. Farmers, as a patriotic gesture, had been asked to increase production to feed the soldiers “over there.” When the war ended, however, government price supports were discontinued, foreign markets were greatly reduced, and the American farmer was left with great agricultural surpluses. Prices plummeted. The farmer could not realize enough income to pay his mortgage and bank notes. Foreclosures became common as the banks tried to survive the agricultural depression. Bank assets began to dwindle. Depositors became wary. They began demanding that their money be returned. The banks could not continue with no money coming in, and depositors withdrawing their money. In 1924, the First National Bank of Rexburg was closed. In 1925, the Farmers and Merchants Bank was likewise forced to close,<sup>16</sup> and Jim was out of the banking business.

Despite the reverses of the post-war years Jim experienced in the banking business, he had been

astute enough to diversify his investment possibilities. On April 21, 1910, a company was incorporated "for the purpose of buying and selling real estate in Fremont County." The company was named the Snake River Realty Company, Limited. The members of the board of directors were James W. Webster, president, Henry J. Flamm, vice-president, I. G. Ryland, secretary-treasurer and manager. C. W. Poole and George Hyde were directors.<sup>17</sup> The men, under Jim's direction, pledged themselves to "bring homesteaders to this section of Idaho." They had "unbounded faith in the future." The firm started out under the "most favorable conditions" and was the means of bringing many people into the area.<sup>18</sup>

While still serving as the president of the Snake River Realty Company, Jim was elected president of yet another firm. A branch of the Pacific Building and Loan Association of San Francisco was opened in Rexburg in August, 1915. The organization was to "prove very helpful for those wanting money with which to build." It would enable the citizens of Rexburg to "get a loan of 50 percent of the appraised value of their city property at reasonable rates of interest, payable in monthly payments." Additionally, up to fifty percent of the appraised value of a planned building could be obtained.<sup>19</sup>

In 1919, Jim bought stock worth two thousand dollars in the Farmers Building Company.<sup>20</sup> He built the Webster business block which housed a variety of businesses,<sup>21</sup> and owned stock in the Woodmen of the World Building Association of Rexburg.<sup>22</sup> He was to be involved in buying and selling real estate for many years.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to his other investments, Jim owned stock in Utah Power and Light, Zion's Co-operative

Mercantile Institution, and the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company.<sup>24</sup> These were all Utah based companies.

Jim served on the building committees of many of the church and civic buildings in Rexburg. His total contribution to the building of the city of Rexburg and the surrounding community was substantial. He was involved in every major project for many, many years and provided economic and leadership resources to bring those projects to completion.



## Conclusion

THE 1930s were years of transition for Jim. The farming enterprise was being ably administered by his sons. His political career had ended, although his interest in politics was still keen. His investments in various businesses and companies were solid. He still devoted a great deal of his time to his varied interests, mainly in a supervisory capacity. Mainly, he maintained an active interest in the progress of his family.

Jim was very much family oriented. At Thanksgiving, the children, grandchildren, and soon great-grandchildren would gather for a family dinner. After 1930, the family gathered in the new home that had just been completed. For several years, Jim's son, James, had lived in the old home, which had been built in 1901. Then for several years it was rented. George S. Romney, a president of Ricks College, as well as a president of the Rexburg Stake, rented the house for three years until he built a home on second south. Jim and Mary had purchased a home in Federal Heights on Butler Avenue in Salt Lake City in 1911. Vida, Kenneth and Lucille still lived at home when the move was made to Salt Lake City. The summers would be spent on the farm in Rexburg, living in a house which had been built on the farm. The family would stay through the harvest. After the children were all married, the Salt Lake City home was

sold. Jim and Mary would then visit their daughter Lucille at her home in Salt Lake City for the winter, or go to Los Angeles, California and spend the winter with their daughter Vida. After the new home was completed in 1930, Jim and Mary spent most of their winters in it. Much of the stone that went into the new home was saved from the old home. It was sandblasted to clean it. The new home was built on the same location as the old one: 72 North 1 East.<sup>1</sup>

The new home was the scene of many happy family gatherings during the 1930s. Christmas was a time when Jim would dress up like Santa Claus and entertain the children. "He'd see that they had a quarter or something in a little Christmas stocking, and then they'd have popcorn balls. And he would be a real Santa Claus, ho-ho-hoing, and just having such a good time."<sup>2</sup>

Maintaining family ties through family reunions continued for years. The reunions were often held in Island Park, or at Lava Hot Springs. Jim's brothers and their families would participate: Sam from Franklin, and Will and Alf from Rexburg. Picnic lunches were enjoyed as the families visited, played games and swam. A part of each reunion was foot-races. Jim liked to race and he was fast. For years he could not be beaten. As a young man he liked to wrestle and was good at that also. He had excellent athletic ability.<sup>3</sup>

Jim had a hobby that benefited his family, as well as friends and neighbors. Each spring he planted a big vegetable garden. He would arise at five o'clock in the morning to tend the garden. When the vegetables were ready to harvest he shared them with his neighbors. He especially delighted in surprising his family. Often, when his children and grandchildren

would leave their homes in the morning to begin their daily activities, they would find a basket of fresh vegetables on the front step.<sup>4</sup>

Especially during the 1930s did the family enjoy the garden that Jim raised. Those were the years of the Great Depression. They were difficult years nationally as well as locally. Jim was a pillar of strength during those difficult times. He had to carefully watch his resources, but he made the right decisions. Along with other property on Main Street in Rexburg, he owned a lot on the corner of First East and Main. He had plans to build a hotel. The excavation work was done, but the stress of the depression on Jim's resources precluded the building of the hotel. The hole remained for several years until a service station was built. By that time, however, Jim had sold the property.<sup>5</sup>

Jim constantly maintained an attitude of optimism, despite some personal set-backs. He encouraged his family and friends to hold on. Despite his encouragement, however, his brothers, Will and Alf sold the farms they had homesteaded years before. Jim encouraged his family to work and raise food to feed the family, and for income. He supplied his daughter-in-law, Lola, with turkeys to raise. He would give about twenty dressed turkeys away each year to friends and family, the rest would be sold by Lola. Jim's family survived the depression with plenty to eat. On their farms they had a milk cow, a pig or two, some bum lambs, chickens, and garden produce.<sup>6</sup>

December 27, 1935, was a day of celebration for the Webster family. On that day "all their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren," except Reed Webster, a grandchild, visited the home of Jim



and Mary in honor of their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Their posterity numbered five children, twenty-one grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.<sup>7</sup> Jim and Mary had actually celebrated their fiftieth anniversary on December 10th, but their children had chosen the 27th for the open house. The bedroom set had been moved out of the master bedroom, and the room was used by Jim and Mary to greet friends. In an adjacent room refreshments were served by granddaughters who looked lovely in long dresses. Lola Webster had arranged for some of her friends to entertain the guests. They stood by the beautiful grand piano and sang several melodies.<sup>8</sup> It was a measure of the respect with which Jim and Mary were held that over three hundred "people called on the estimable couple that day." The couple "were delightful hosts and made everybody feel welcome in their beautiful home."<sup>9</sup> Among the guests was Charles C. Moore, former Governor of Idaho. To cap the day, the family gathered in the recreation hall of the new Fourth Ward Church for a family dinner. The dinner was under the direction of Elmo's wife, Lou, and Lola's mother, Effie E. Merrill.<sup>10</sup> It was a great day, enjoyed by all, but especially by Jim and Mary. A reporter from the *Rexburg Journal* noted that the couple had "been energetic workers all their lives and appeared on their golden wedding anniversary in excellent health and vigor."<sup>11</sup> What the reporter and the majority of the guests did not know was that Jim's health was not what it seemed.

During 1935, Jim and his family had received some bad news. Jim had not been feeling as energetic as usual. He visited some medical authorities who, after a series of examination, informed him that

he had cancer. Jim had been vigorous all his life. The next few years were difficult as his vigor lessened and he could not do those things he had been so accustomed to doing. His son, James took over the management of the farm. However, he still took care of the garden and kept a careful eye on the farm operation. The family would visit him each day to check on him and get instructions. Often he would ask to be taken for a ride. After he was in the car he would direct the driver to take him up on the hill so he could see the land he loved so much.<sup>12</sup>

Jim's family took turns taking him and Mary to Salt Lake City every two or three months for the last two years of his life. He would receive x-ray therapy from Dr. Cowan. He was not homebound or helpless until about the last six months of his life. Even then he read widely. He especially liked to read anything pertaining to Idaho, but he was conversant with a wide range of local and national issues because of his varied interests. During the last half of 1940, Jim's condition deteriorated. His family tenderly cared for him, but it was apparent that the situation was irreversible.<sup>13</sup>

Jim's children all lived in Rexburg, except Vida, who lived in California. Because of the serious condition of her father, Vida was called home. She and her husband arrived early in December, 1940. Vida's husband was a dentist. He took care of Jim and gave him shots to ease the pain when they were needed. All the family helped with the washing and cooking to relieve Mary.<sup>14</sup>

On Wednesday, January 8, Jim "lapsed into a coma, and his situation was grave."<sup>15</sup> The family decided to secure the services of a professional nurse to care for him. Accordingly they called a family friend,

Ruth Mae Blunck, a registered nurse. When she arrived, Jim was in a coma. To her surprize Jim awakened from the coma. "He called his wife and told her that he wanted her to call all the children and the grandchildren that were old enough, to come in and he wanted to talk to them." Both Mary and the nurse tried to dissuade him. They told him that it was late at night and everyone was home asleep. "He said that that made no difference at all. He wanted them to come, and he wanted them there right away." They were called as quickly as possible and all responded.<sup>16</sup> Jim then called each of his children into the room one-by-one and gave them instructions concerning those things that he considered important. He told each one to take care of their mother and be good to her.<sup>17</sup> He also told each one "to take care of the widows and orphans, and if there was anybody that needed something, to go and help them out." He then would bear "his testimony to the truthfulness of the gospel." He "told them a little about the Joseph Smith story," and that "he knew that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God." Then, because he knew his children so well, "he told them a little about their faults," and "told them he would like to see them corrected." Most of all he wanted them "to realize that the gospel was the most important thing in their life." After he had talked to each of his children, he asked for his wife. "She went in and when he talked to her they closed the door." No one heard the "message that he gave to her." After Mary came out of the room, the family held a prayer circle in the outer room. The nurse went back into Jim's room. He lapsed once again into a coma.<sup>18</sup>

James Whaley Webster ended an illustrious life



at 10:15 p.m., Wednesday, January 8, 1941. He was seventy-nine years old.<sup>19</sup>

The funeral arrangements were under the direction of the First Ward Bishop, Marriner D. Morrell. Bishop Morrell knew that the First Ward chapel would not accommodate the number of people who would want to attend the funeral and pay their last respects. He scheduled the funeral for January 13th, in the stake tabernacle.<sup>20</sup>

Attending the funeral as the principal speaker was Richard R. Lyman, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He addressed the congregation after the invocation given by Alma B. Larsen, the stake patriarch.<sup>21</sup> Apostle Lyman used the scripture found in John 3:16 to set the tone for his sermon, and said of Jim: “‘Because he believed in the Master, he shall not perish, but have everlasting life.’” He said that “Mr. Webster was a pioneer in his field, as he eulogized the character of the farming, political and church leader.”<sup>22</sup> It was quite obvious from the remarks of Apostle Lyman that Jim “had been in close touch and relationship with the leaders of the church for a number of years and he was not only friendly” with Apostle Lyman, “but probably most of the General Authorities.”<sup>23</sup>

Other speakers were I. A. Smoot of Salt Lake City, who praised Jim’s character, and O. P. Soule who was a partner with Jim on the dry farm. Soule said that “‘In some 40 years of our business association we never had a harsh word.’” Furthermore, Jim had been a man of “‘honesty, integrity, and evenness of temper.’” Also speaking were C. A. Harris, who spoke of Jim’s abilities as a dry farmer and businessman, and H. A. Wright, the former bishop of

the First Ward. He told of Jim's activity in church work and his "faithfulness to church duties."<sup>24</sup>

Part of the music for the services was provided by the stake choir under the direction of Christian Schwendiman, accompanied on the organ by George Rytting. They sang the hymns "Oh, My Father," and "Nearer My God To Thee." The song "Face to Face," was sung by Mrs. D. M. Davis and Mrs. J. C. Siddoway. Additionally, "a mixed quartet composed of Mr. and Mrs. K. W. Devenport and Mr. and Mrs. Evan Christensen sang, 'A Perfect Day.'" After the closing song, Heber Austin of Idaho Falls pronounced the benediction. The congregation then proceeded to the Rexburg cemetery where burial took place under the direction of Flamm mortuary. "Fred S. Parkinson dedicated the grave." The pallbearers were Weldon, Tom, Reed, Chester, Kenneth Jr., and Lewis Webster, all Jim's grandsons. Acting as honorary pallbearers were W. Lloyd Adams, Ross J. Comstock, A. E. Taylor, Joseph E. Rigby, M. Hillman and Nick Summers, each a close friend and associate. The First Ward Relief Society, "under the direction of Chris P. Jensen," took care of the "profusion of beautiful flowers" which had "completely covered the entire front of the large auditorium."<sup>25</sup>

Bishop Marriner D. Morrell reminisced about Jim's characteristics. Jim, he said, was "not a large man in stature but he was a really large man in personality. He had bright sparkling eyes. He spoke with authority. He always was very neat and well-dressed and just assumed an attitude of a leader — not ostentatious in any way — but he recognized the fact that the people had a lot of confidence in him and looked to him for leadership and he appeared always a very dynamic leader."<sup>26</sup>



A significant eulogy for Jim was forwarded to his family by members of the Senate of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Idaho Legislature in the form of a Resolution:

#### A SENATE RESOLUTION

“WHEREAS, James W. Webster, a former member of this Senate from Madison County, was one of the real builders of the West. He came to Rexburg more than fifty years ago. He was then in the sheep business. His coming to the upper Snake River Valley with his thousands of head of sheep made a ready market for the farmers of that section. He grazed his sheep upon the land of Madison, Fremont, and Teton Counties which is now State land. It was through Mr. Webster’s efforts, largely, that former Governor Frank R. Gooding made the selection of these lands from the Federal Government. Had it not been for Mr. Webster’s efforts the lands would not belong to the State of Idaho.

“WHEREAS, Mr. Webster, through experimentation, discovered that wheat could be raised without water upon the land which he used for grazing purposes, and he immediately began dry land farming in a extensive way. He was the pioneer dry farmer of the upper Snake River Valley. It was not long until he could boast with pride that he had under one fence six thousand acres of grain which was formerly grazing land, and that it would take a train of one hundred cars to haul the products of the one year’s crop to market.

“WHEREAS, He was one of the great characters of Idaho. His early life was spent in combatting nature. His was the age of the survival of the fittest. He was compelled to stand upon his own feet and fight the battle against the elements and nature. His record of fifty years’ achievement as a farmer and stock raiser has made him one of Idaho’s greatest benefactors. He served in the House of Representatives for two terms and in this Senate for one term. He served as Mayor of Rexburg and held many other positions of public trust. He was one of the most prominent leaders and a respected member of the L.D.S. Church.

“THEREFORE, It is well that we today pay tribute to the memory of such a man.



"BE IT RESOLVED, By the Senate of the Twenty-sixth Session of the Idaho Legislature: That we extend our sympathy to the bereaved members of his family and that this Resolution be spread at length upon the Journal of the Senate and that the Secretary of the Senate be and he is hereby instructed to send copies of this Resolution to the members of his family."

Moved by Senator Graham that the Resolution be adopted.

Seconded by Senator Bailey.

Motion carried.

Whereupon Senator Baird declared the Resolution adopted.<sup>27</sup>

Perhaps the crowning eulogy for Jim came from his youngest daughter, Lucille, who recalled that "he was a wonderful father, kind and thoughtful."<sup>28</sup>

In 1959, as a memorial to her husband, Mary gave the first one thousand dollar donation to the Madison County Library Fund. The new library was dedicated on February 21, 1961. The local radio station, KRXX, carried the dedication ceremony. Mary, who was bed-ridden, heard the dedication and had the satisfaction of knowing that her generous donation in honor of her husband inspired other donations and brought the library project to a successful conclusion.<sup>29</sup>

Jim's legacy to Idaho history is substantial, one for which his posterity can justly be proud. Undoubtedly, however, he would like to be remembered by his descendants mainly as a loving husband and father, then as a pioneer church leader, dry farmer, stockraiser, politician and businessman.

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## Footnotes

### Chapter One

<sup>1</sup> This information came from Uarda Webster Merrill and is part of a history of William Lott Webster compiled and written by his granddaughter, Neta Webster Cottle, hereinafter noted as "William L. Webster History." Much of the information in this history came from Edward W. Tullidge, *Tullidge's Histories: Northern Utah & Southern Idaho*, (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor, 1889), pp. 350-351, and from the obituary published in the *Deseret Weekly*, May 1, 1897, Vol. 54, No. 20, p. 640.

<sup>2</sup> William L. Webster History.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> History of Emma Whaley Webster written by her granddaughter, Neta Webster Cottle, hereinafter noted as "Emma W. Webster History."

<sup>6</sup> William L. Webster History.

<sup>7</sup> Tullidge, p. 350.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Emma W. Webster History.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> William L. Webster History.

<sup>12</sup> Emma W. Webster History.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> William L. Webster History.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* Sometime during the month of October they arrived in Franklin according to Cottle. Tullidge, p. 350, says they left Salt Lake City on Christmas Day, 1862.

<sup>17</sup> The original name of the settlement. For a summary of the settlement of Old Fort, and the change in name to Franklin, see pp. 28 & 29.

<sup>18</sup> Marie Danielsen, compiler, *The Trail Blazer: History of the Development of Southeastern Idaho*, (Preston: Cache Valley Newsletter Publishing Company, 1930, revised, 1976), p.36.

Preston Thomas was appointed Bishop by President Brigham Young in June, 1860.

<sup>19</sup> Danielsen, p. 36.

<sup>20</sup> *Deseret Weekly*, Salt Lake City, Utah, May 1, 1897.

<sup>21</sup> Newell Hart, editor, *Hometown Album*, (Preston: Cache Valley Newsletter Publishing Company, 1973), pp. 126 & 758.

<sup>22</sup> Emma W. Webster History.

<sup>23</sup> A narrow gauge (three feet between rails and thirty pounds per yard of rail) line was chosen for several reasons: Substantially less cost; easier to adapt to the type of terrain to be traversed; less weight of the rolling stock which would reduce wear and tear; and easier to construct.

<sup>24</sup> Merrill D. Beal, *Intermountain Railroads, Standard and Narrow Gauge*, (Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1962), pp. 8-59.

<sup>25</sup> The name "Eagle Rock" was the name given the settlement in reference to a large rock in the river upon which eagles built their nests. Later, the name was changed to Idaho Falls. *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the Idaho State Historical Department, 1951-1952*, Boise, Idaho, December 31, 1952, p. 73.

<sup>26</sup> Merrill D. Beal and Merle W. Wells, *History of Idaho*, Vol. I, (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1959), p. 512. For a brief summary of the building of the railroad see: David L. Crowder, *Tendoy, Chief of the Lemhis*, (Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1969), pp. 72-75.

<sup>27</sup> William L. Webster History. L. H. Nichols, "William L. Webster Dictation," June 23, 1885, Hubert H. Bancroft Collection, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California.

<sup>28</sup> William L. Webster History.

<sup>29</sup> Nichols, "William L. Webster Dictation," June 23, 1885.

<sup>30</sup> Emma W. Webster History.

<sup>31</sup> Tullidge, p. 385.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 482-483.

<sup>33</sup> *Progressive Men of Idaho*, (Chicago: A. W. Bowen & Co., 1904), p. 457.

<sup>34</sup> Lester Parkinson Taylor, *Samuel Rose Parkinson, Portrait of a Pioneer*, (Provo: Dana Press, 1977), p. 99.

<sup>35</sup> Danielsen, p. 37.

<sup>36</sup> *The Idaho Almanac*, (Boise: Syms-York Company, 1963), p. 174. The *Almanac* lists one of the Representatives from Oneida County as "W. B. Webster." This is an error. The *History of Idaho Territory*, (San Francisco: Wallace W. Elliott and Company, 1884), p. 297 has the correct listing.



<sup>37</sup> James H. Hawley, *History of Idaho*, Vol. I, (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1920), pp. 183-184.

<sup>38</sup> Beal and Wells, *History of Idaho*, Vol. I, p. 428.

<sup>39</sup> Hiram T. French, *History of Idaho*, Vol. I, (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1914), pp. 72-73.

<sup>40</sup> *Idaho Almanac*, p. 174.

<sup>41</sup> French, p. 73.

<sup>42</sup> For a summary of the anti-Mormon crusade and its effect on Territorial politics see Beal and Wells, *History of Idaho*, Vol. I, pp. 553-570 and 581-596.

<sup>43</sup> Taylor, p. 119.

<sup>44</sup> William L. Webster History.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> Copy of the funeral notice in the possession of the author.

<sup>47</sup> Copy of the funeral notice in possession of the author. A painting of William and Emma hangs in the Franklin, Idaho Relic Hall. It was done by Lillian Webster in 1964.

## Chapter Two

<sup>1</sup> Frank Esshom, *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah* (Salt Lake City: Utah Pioneers Publishing Company, 1913), p. 1164, notes the mother's name as Mary Marie Sharatt.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Sharratt Smart Family Organization, hereinafter noted as the "Smart Family History."

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Apparently, the exact date is not known.

<sup>7</sup> Smart Family History. Mary Jane was to become the wife of James Whaley Webster.

<sup>8</sup> Esshom, p. 1164.

<sup>9</sup> Smart Family History. Esshom lists the mother as Kezzia Denison, p. 1164.

<sup>10</sup> Smart Family History. According to the History, Henry Hayter was born April 20, 1804. Esshom, p. 1164, notes he was born in 1789.

<sup>11</sup> Smart Family History.

<sup>12</sup> Original document dated March 2, 1848, in possession of the author. Apparently Thomas S. Smart could not write at that time as the document was signed with his "X" mark.

<sup>13</sup> Original document dated March 23, 1850, in possession of the author. Thomas had evidently learned to write his name by this time as his signature appears on the document.

<sup>14</sup> Smart Family History.

<sup>15</sup> Andrew Jensen, *Biographical Encyclopedia: A Compilation of Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men & Women in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jensen History Company, 1914), Vol. III, p. 515.

<sup>16</sup> Utah Territory had been created as part of the famous Compromise of 1850. Brigham Young had instructed his emissary to Washington, John M. Bernhisel, to petition the Congress for statehood but that was not to be. Statehood would wait for many years. For a summary of the establishment of Utah Territory see: James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1976), pp. 258–263.

<sup>17</sup> Smart Family History.

<sup>18</sup> Esshom, p. 1164.

<sup>19</sup> Smart Family History.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Presumably an adjustment was made somewhere as the figures add up to one-thousand two-hundred forty-four dollars.

<sup>23</sup> Original contract, dated March 24, 1857, in possession of the author.

<sup>24</sup> The official certificate was issued, upon request, on March 22, 1887, over the signature of the presiding President of the "Council of the First Seven Presidents of the Seventies," H. S. Eldredge. Original certificate in possession of the author.

<sup>25</sup> Marie Danielsen, compiler, *The Trail Blazer: History of the Development of Southeastern Idaho*, (Preston: Cache Valley Newsletter Publishing Company, 1930, revised, 1976), p. 17.

<sup>26</sup> L. H. Nichols, "Thos. Smart Dictation," June 23, 1885, Hubert H. Bancroft Collection, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California. Idaho Poets and Writers Guild, *The Idaho Story*, (Iona: Ipas Publishing Co., 1968), Vol. I, p. 211.

<sup>27</sup> *The Idaho Story*, p. 209.

<sup>28</sup> Joel E. Ricks, *The History of a Valley*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Company, 1956), p. 46n. Joel Edward Ricks, *The Beginning of Settlement In Cache Valley*, (Logan: The Faculty Association of Utah State Agricultural College, 1953), p. 20.

<sup>29</sup> Danielsen, p. 18.

<sup>30</sup> Jensen, p. 515.

<sup>31</sup> Lester Parkinson Taylor, *Samuel Rose Parkinson, Portrait*

of a Pioneer, (Provo: Dana Press, 1977), p. 64. In the Pioneer Relic Hall in Franklin is an old cedar post that was on the survey line at the corner of the Smart property.

<sup>32</sup> *An Illustrated History of the State of Idaho*, (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1899), p. 698.

<sup>33</sup> Taylor p. 64.

<sup>34</sup> *The Idaho Story*, p. 220.

<sup>35</sup> *Progressive Men of Idaho*, (Chicago: A. W. Bowen & Co., 1904), pp. 57 & 345.

<sup>36</sup> Taylor, p. 65.

<sup>37</sup> Danielsen, p. 23.

<sup>38</sup> Jensen, p. 516.

<sup>39</sup> Kate B. Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, (Salt Lake City: Utah Printing Company, 1969), Vol. 3, pp. 559-560.

<sup>40</sup> Smart Family History.

<sup>41</sup> Taylor, p. 71.

<sup>42</sup> Merrill D. Beal and Merle W. Wells, *History of Idaho*, Vol. I, (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1959), p. 402.

<sup>43</sup> Kate B. Carter, *Treasures of Pioneer History*, (Salt Lake City: Utah Printing Company, 1954), p. 423.

<sup>44</sup> Taylor, p. 71.

<sup>45</sup> Original Deed dated May 27, 1885, in possession of the author.

<sup>46</sup> Original Deed, dated June 1, 1891, in possession of the author.

<sup>47</sup> Original Deed, dated December 15, 1893, in possession of the author.

<sup>48</sup> Danielsen, p. 154.

<sup>49</sup> Inventory of Property of Estate of Thos. S. Smart, June 4, 1901. Original document in possession of the author.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Danielsen, p. 37.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>53</sup> Taylor, p. 100.

<sup>54</sup> Jensen, p. 515. Souvenir Brochure of the Thomas Sharratt Smart Family Reunion, July 19, 1947. For a study of the Black Hawk War see: Carlton Culmsee, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1973), and Peter Gottfredson, *Indian Depredation in Utah*, (Salt Lake City: Private Printing, 1969).

<sup>55</sup> Edward W. Tullidge, *Tullidge's Histories: Northern Utah & Southern Idaho*, (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor, 1889), pp. 361-376.



<sup>56</sup> Ricks, *The History of a Valley*, p. 54.

<sup>57</sup> Smart Family History.

<sup>58</sup> Original certificates, dated February 26, 1885, and March 23, 1885, in possession of the author.

<sup>59</sup> Ricks, *A History of a Valley*, p. 282.

<sup>60</sup> Jensen, p. 515.

<sup>61</sup> Original document, dated July 19, 1886, in possession of the author.

<sup>62</sup> Smart Family History.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Original documents, dated April 21, 1870, and December 29, 1899, in possession of the author.

<sup>65</sup> Smart Family History.

<sup>66</sup> From the "Journal of Mary Ann Weston Maughan" as recorded in: Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, Vol. 2, p. 402.

<sup>67</sup> Smart Family History.

<sup>68</sup> Jensen, p. 515.

<sup>69</sup> Danielsen, p. 7.

<sup>70</sup> Jensen, p. 515.

<sup>71</sup> Newell Hart, editor, *Hometown Album*, (Preston: Cache Valley Newsletter Publishing Co., 1973), p. 805.

### Chapter Three

<sup>1</sup> Hereinafter the cognomen "Jim" will be used as appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal of the State Senate of the Idaho Legislature, Twenty-Sixth Session*, (Published by Authority of the Secretary of State, 1941), p. 182. The full text of the Senate Resolution is found on pages 119 & 120. See also the *Rexburg Journal*, March 13, 1941.

<sup>3</sup> *Supra*, p. 17 & 18.

<sup>4</sup> *Senate Journal, Twenty-Sixth Session*, p. 182.

<sup>5</sup> Lola Merrill Webster Material. Lola M. Webster is the daughter-in-law of James W. Webster. She is the wife of Kenneth S. Webster, who was the youngest son of James and Mary Jane Smart Webster. Kenneth and Lola met each other in Salt Lake City in 1913. They were both living there at the time. They renewed their acquaintance when both were attending the Agricultural College in Logan, Utah. They were married on April 5, 1916. — *Post-Register*, Idaho Falls, Idaho, June 11, 1964, p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> *Progressive Men of Idaho*, (Chicago: A. W. Bowen & Co., 1904), p. 458.

<sup>7</sup> *Supra*, p. 18.

<sup>8</sup> Lola Webster Material.

<sup>9</sup> James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1976), pp. 276 & 352.

<sup>10</sup> "Excerpts From the Remarks of Thomas L. Smart at the Funeral of his Aunt, Mary Jane Smart Webster." Copy in possession of the author. Hereinafter noted as: "Thomas L. Smart Remarks."

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Sharratt Smart Family Organization History. *Progressive Men of Idaho*, p. 458, erroneously lists the marriage day as December 6, 1886.

<sup>12</sup> Smart Family History.

<sup>13</sup> Thomas L. Smart Remarks.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Progressive Men of Idaho*, p. 459.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 458. *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>17</sup> *Progressive Men of Idaho*, p. 458.

<sup>18</sup> In the Thomas S. Smart Family History the arrival site is noted as Rexburg, but a railroad line would not be completed to Rexburg for four more years.

<sup>19</sup> Smart Family History. Originally the name of the area was Hiatt, named for an original settler. The name was changed to Plano on September 1, 1900. The name was supplied by J. Odum who came from Plano, Illinois. Samuel M. Beal, *The Snake River Fork Country*, (Rexburg: The Rexburg Journal, 1935), p. 33. Louis J. Clements and Harold S. Forbush, *Pioneering the Snake River Fork Country*, (Rexburg: Eastern Idaho Publications Co., 1972), pp. 239-240.

<sup>20</sup> Vardis Fisher, editor, *The Idaho Encyclopedia*, (Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1938), pp. 411-412.

<sup>21</sup> *Idaho, A Guide in Word and Picture*, (Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1937), p. 206.

<sup>22</sup> *The Idaho Encyclopedia*, p. 412.

<sup>23</sup> Merrill D. Beal, *Intermountain Railroads, Standard and Narrow Gauge*, (Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1962), pp. 203-204.

#### Chapter Four

<sup>1</sup> *Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, October 25, 1898, p. 2. Hereinafter noted as *Journal History*.

<sup>2</sup> "Excerpts from the Remarks of Thomas L. Smart at the Funeral of his Aunt, Mary Jane Smart Webster."

<sup>3</sup> *Journal History*, April 28, 1901, p. 4. *Deseret News* Salt Lake City, May 11, 1901.

<sup>4</sup> *Manuscript History of Fremont Stake*, April 29, 1901, Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. Samuel M. Beal, *The Snake River Fork Country*, (Rexburg: *The Rexburg Journal*, 1935), p. 29. *Deseret News*, May 11, 1901.

<sup>5</sup> *Journal History*, May 2, 1901, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Minutes of the Ricks College Board of Education*, May 17, 1901, Ricks College Archives, pp. 75-76. Hereinafter noted as *Board of Education Minutes*. For a synopsis of Webster's involvement with Ricks Academy see: David Crowder, "James Whaley Webster: Ricks Academy Board of Education Member, 1901-1905," *New Perspectives*, Ricks College, Vol. 1, No. 9, December, 1978, pp. 5-6.

<sup>7</sup> "Eighty Years," 1888-1968, Commemorative Edition, Ricks College, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Hiram T. French, *History of Idaho*, Vol. I, (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1914), pp. 440-441.

<sup>9</sup> "Eighty Years", p. 3. Jerry C. Roundy, *Ricks College: A Struggle For Survival*, (Rexburg: Ricks College Press, 1976), p. 53.

<sup>10</sup> Roundy, p. 54.

<sup>11</sup> Beal, *The Snake River Fork Country*, p. 47.

<sup>12</sup> He was to legally change his last name to Dalby. *Current-Journal*, Rexburg, Idaho, January 31, 1907.

<sup>13</sup> *Board of Education Minutes*, June 15, 1901, pp. 77-78.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, June 27, 1901, pp. 80-81.

<sup>16</sup> French, p. 441.

<sup>17</sup> *Diary of Ezra C. Dalby*, June 18, 1901 to December 31, 1902, Entries of August 13, 1901 through August 25, 1901, pp. 30-44, microfilm, Ricks College Archives. Hereinafter noted as "Dalby Diary."

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, October 7, 1901, p. 72.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, December 20, 1901, p. 101.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, January 6, 1902, p. 111.

<sup>21</sup> *Board of Education Minutes*, December 23, 1901, p. 84.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, January 5, 1902, p. 85.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.



- <sup>26</sup> *Current-Journal*, Rexburg, Idaho, January 28, 1902.
- <sup>27</sup> *Journal History*, January 30, 1901, p. 1.
- <sup>28</sup> *Board of Education Minutes*, January 25, 1902, p. 88.  
*Dalby Diary*, January 25, 1902, p. 117.
- <sup>29</sup> *Board of Education Minutes*, January 26, 1902, pp. 93–94.
- <sup>30</sup> *Dalby Diary*, January 26, 1902, p. 118.
- <sup>31</sup> *Board of Education Minutes*, January 26, 1902, pp. 93–94.  
*Dalby Diary*, January 26, 1902, p. 119.
- <sup>32</sup> *Board of Education Minutes*, March 5, 1902, p. 95.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, March 13, 1902; April 25, 1902; April 27, 1902; April 28, 1902; pp. 96–102.
- <sup>34</sup> *Dalby Diary*, April 5, 1902, pp. 146–147.
- <sup>35</sup> Lola Webster Interview, January 19, 1978.
- <sup>36</sup> *Dalby Diary*, September 19, 1902, p. 230; October 20, 1902, p. 248; December 19, 1902, p. 276. *Board of Education Minutes*, October 20, 1902, p. 107.
- <sup>37</sup> Hyrum Manwaring, "Ricks College, A History of Fifty-Six Years, 1888–1944," Unpublished Manuscript, Ricks College Archives, 1952, part two, chapter four, p. 10–11.
- <sup>38</sup> *Board of Education Minutes*, June 24, 1904, pp. 125–126.
- <sup>39</sup> *Manuscript History of Fremont Stake*, July 29, 1905.
- <sup>40</sup> *Current-Journal*, Rexburg, Idaho, August 3, 1905.
- <sup>41</sup> *Board of Education Minutes*, July 31, 1905, p. 138.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, February 4, 1910, pp. 283–284.
- <sup>43</sup> *Current-Journal*, February 24, 1910.
- <sup>44</sup> *Dalby Diary*, January 1, 1909 to October 17, 1910, entry dated February 22, 1910, pp. 121–122.
- <sup>45</sup> *Current-Journal*, February 24, 1910.
- <sup>46</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Rexburg, Idaho, October 13, 1910. *Current-Journal*, October 14, 1910. "Eighty Years, 1888–1968", p. 6. Norman E. Ricks, *A Brief History of Ricks College*, Ricks College Archives, p. 11.
- <sup>47</sup> *Board of Education Minutes*, March 11, 1910, pp. 287–288.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, April 1, 1910, pp. 289–291.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, April 5, 1910, pp. 291–294.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, May 20, 1910, pp. 296–297.
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, June 3, 1910, p. 299.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, March 27, 1914, pp. 341–344.
- <sup>53</sup> *Missionary Record*, Book D. Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, p. 194, notes that Jim was baptized at eight years of age. Rilla Webster Garner notes on the family group sheet she submitted for William Lott Webster, her grandfather, that Jim was baptized on May 19, 1883, at twenty

years of age. — Four-Generation Program, 1965, Box 525, Ricks College Genealogical Library.

<sup>54</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, January 13, 1941.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, Prosperity Number, December 1915.

<sup>56</sup> *Missionary Record*, Book D, Church Archives, p. 194.

<sup>57</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, January 13, 1941.

<sup>58</sup> *Current-Journal*, November 14, 1907. Lucille Webster Howe Interview, February 6, 1978.

### Chapter Five

<sup>1</sup> "Excerpts From the Remarks of Thomas L. Smart at the Funeral of his Aunt, Mary Jane Smart Webster." Hereinafter noted as: "Thomas L. Smart Remarks."

<sup>2</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> Lola M. Webster Material.

<sup>4</sup> For the best study of the episode see: David H. Grover, *Diamondfield Jack, a Study in Frontier Justice*, (Reno: University Press, 1968).

<sup>5</sup> Thomas L. Smart Remarks.

<sup>6</sup> Parkinson Family History in possession of Ross Parkinson. Ross is a son of Frederick Smart Parkinson. F. S. Parkinson was Mary Jane Smart Webster's nephew. Hereinafter cited as Parkinson Family History.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas L. Smart Remarks.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Madison County Records, Rexburg, Idaho Courthouse, *Deed Record*, Book 29, March 30, 1901, p. 44. Hereinafter cited as "MCR."

<sup>10</sup> Thomas L. Smart Remarks.

<sup>11</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>12</sup> Lola Webster Material.

<sup>13</sup> MCR, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, No. 1517, September 30, 1903, pp. 38-39.

<sup>14</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>15</sup> Parkinson Family History.

<sup>16</sup> Ross Parkinson Photograph Album, in possession of Ross Parkinson.

<sup>17</sup> *Progressive Men of Idaho*, (Chicago: A. W. Bowen & Co., 1904), p. 458.

<sup>18</sup> Ross Parkinson Photograph Album.

<sup>19</sup> *Progressive Men of Idaho*, p. 458

<sup>20</sup> Thomas L. Smart Remarks.

<sup>21</sup> MCR, *Deeds*, Book 15, No. 19944 and No. 19945, February 12, 1906, pp. 567-568.



<sup>22</sup> MCR, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, No. 10877, January 15, 1906, pp. 74-75.

<sup>23</sup> MCR, *Release of Mortgage*, Book 18, No. 27177, August 4, 1909, pp. 348-349.

<sup>24</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, February 17, 1910, quoting from the *Gem State Rural-Journal*.

<sup>25</sup> Ledger Book of the Smart & Webster Live Stock Company and the Parkinson Live Stock Company, in possession of Ross Parkinson.

<sup>26</sup> Ross Parkinson Photograph Album and Parkinson Family History.

<sup>27</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Ledger Book.

<sup>30</sup> *Current-Journal*, Rexburg, Idaho, December 23, 1913.

<sup>31</sup> Everett Dick, *The Lure of the Land*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), pp. 138-139; 363

<sup>32</sup> Samuel M. Beal, *The Snake River Fork Country*, (Rexburg: The Rexburg Journal, 1935), p. 37.

<sup>33</sup> M. D. Beal, *A History of Southeastern Idaho*, (Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1942), p. 336.

<sup>34</sup> L. C. Aicher, "Growing Grain on Southern Idaho Dry Farms," *Farmers' Bulletin* 769, United States Department of Agriculture, October, 1916, pp. 16-17.

<sup>35</sup> James H. Hawley, *History of Idaho*, Vol. II, (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1920), p. 64. Also: *Idaho*, (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1920), p. 89.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Progressive Men of Idaho*, p. 582

<sup>38</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>39</sup> A person had seven years from the time of filing to "prove up" on his homestead. As the land became more valuable, many homesteaders would sell out and make a nice profit. The buyer of the property would have to continue the seven year prove up period while the seller could file on another homestead if he chose. This process was called "relinquishment." Dick, p. 151.

<sup>40</sup> MCR, *Assignment of Mortgages*, Book 55, No. 7280, September 12, 1904, p. 203.

<sup>41</sup> MCR, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, No. 8525, March 10, 1906, p. 75.

<sup>42</sup> Aicher, pp. 6-7, calls the large dry farms bonanza farms.

<sup>43</sup> MCR, *Deeds*, Book 29, No. 21002, April 18, 1908, p. 311.

<sup>44</sup> MCR, *Mortgages*, Book 35, No. 19398, December 7, 1907, pp. 125-126. *Release of Mortgages*, Book 18, No. 21001, April 18, 1908, p. 243.



<sup>45</sup> Beal, *Snake River Fork Country*, p. 37.

<sup>46</sup> "Autobiography of Charles Joseph Zollinger," undated, unpublished manuscript, Ricks College Library.

<sup>47</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>48</sup> MCR, *Mortgages*, Book 12, No. 21215 and No. 21216, pp. 15–19. *Release of Mortgages*, Book 54, No. 1586 and No. 1587, June 6, 1914, pp. 59–60.

<sup>49</sup> *Idaho*, p. 90.

<sup>50</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>51</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, February 17, 1910, quoting from the *Gem State Rural-Journal*.

<sup>52</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915. Also: Beal, *History of Southeastern Idaho*, p. 429n.

<sup>53</sup> Lola Webster Interview, January 19, 1978.

<sup>54</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>55</sup> William H. Blunk Interview, July 3, 1978.

<sup>56</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>57</sup> MCR, *Mortgages*, Book 8, No. 39959, September 4, 1911, pp. 378–380. *Release of Mortgages*, Book 14, No. 3168, November 28, 1914, p. 473.

<sup>58</sup> Hawley, p. 64.

<sup>59</sup> *Current-Journal*, December 22, 1913.

<sup>60</sup> MCR, *Mortgages*, Book 1, No. 4513, March 19, 1915, pp. 65–66. *Releases*, Book 108, No. 30516, July 10, 1924, p. 223.

<sup>61</sup> *Current-Journal*, March 26 and April 2, 1915.

<sup>62</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> John A. Widtsoe, *In a Sunlit Land*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1952), p. 114.

<sup>66</sup> William H. Blunk Interview, July 3, 1978.

<sup>67</sup> MCR, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, No. 8463, July 31, 1916, pp. 233–234.

<sup>68</sup> MCR, "Articles of Incorporation," File 15, Instrument No. 8525, September 18, 1916.

<sup>69</sup> MCR, *Miscellaneous Record*, Book 97, No. 24520, May 23, 1922, p. 358.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 30293, pp. 581–582.

<sup>71</sup> Lucille Howe Interview, February 6, 1978.

<sup>72</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, September 14, 1916.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, August 23, 1928.

<sup>74</sup> *Rexburg Journal*, June 15, 1928. *Rexburg Standard*, November 15, 1928.

<sup>75</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, January 9 and 23, 1930. *Rexburg Journal*, January 10, 1930.

<sup>76</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, February 20, 1930.

### Chapter Six

<sup>1</sup> *Current-Journal*, October 4, 1906.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, October 11, 1906.

<sup>3</sup> *Rigby Star*, Rigby, Idaho, November 9, 1906.

<sup>4</sup> *Idaho Daily Statesman*, Boise, Idaho, January 27, 1907.

<sup>5</sup> Lucille Webster Howe Interview, February 6, 1978.

<sup>6</sup> *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Idaho*, Ninth Session, Published by the Authority of the Secretary of State, 1907, p. 96. Hereinafter cited as "House Journal." For an account of the assassination and trial see: David H. Grover, *Debaters and Dynamiters: The Story of the Haywood Trial*, (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1964).

<sup>7</sup> *House Journal*, Ninth Session, pp. 19-20.

<sup>8</sup> *Idaho Daily Statesman*, January 9, 15, and February 7, 1907.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, January 26, 1907.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, March 9, 1907.

<sup>11</sup> *House Journal*, Ninth Session, p. 72. *Idaho Daily Statesman*, February 2, 1907.

<sup>12</sup> *House Journal*, Ninth Session, pp. 72, 73, 77, 78, 88, and 104.

<sup>13</sup> *Idaho Daily Statesman*, March 8 and 9, 1907.

<sup>14</sup> *House Journal*, Ninth Session, p. 93. *Idaho Daily Statesman*, January 14, 1907.

<sup>15</sup> *House Journal*, Ninth Session, pp. 108, 109, 252, 296. *Idaho Daily Statesman*, March 9, 1907.

<sup>16</sup> *House Journal*, Ninth Session, p. 144.

<sup>17</sup> *Idaho Daily Statesman*, March 1, 1907.

<sup>18</sup> *House Journal*, Ninth Session, pp. 144, 292, 294, 306. *General Laws of The State of Idaho, Passed at the Ninth Session of the State Legislature*, Published by Authority of the Secretary of State, 1907, pp. 523-525.

<sup>19</sup> James H. Hawley, *History of Idaho*, (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1920), pp. 274-278.

<sup>20</sup> *Rigby Star*, October 1, 1908.

<sup>21</sup> *Sugar City Times*, Sugar City, Idaho, Christmas Edition, 1908.

<sup>22</sup> *Rigby Star*, October 20, 1908.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, November 18, 1908.

<sup>24</sup> *Idaho Daily Statesman*, January 3, 1909.

<sup>25</sup> Hawley, p. 282. *Rigby Star*, January 14 and 21, 1909.

<sup>26</sup> *Idaho Daily Statesman*, January 5, 1909.

<sup>27</sup> *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Idaho*, Tenth Session, Published by the Authority of the Secretary of State, 1909, p. 20. Hereinafter cited as "House Journal, Tenth Session."

<sup>28</sup> *Idaho Daily Statesman*, February 13, 1909.

<sup>29</sup> *House Journal*, Tenth Session, p. 488.

<sup>30</sup> *General Laws of the State of Idaho, Passed at the Tenth Session of the State Legislature*, Published by Authority of the Secretary of State, 1909, p. 72.

<sup>31</sup> *Rigby Star*, February 4, 1909.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, January 21, 1909.

<sup>33</sup> *Idaho Daily Statesman*, March 8, 1909.

<sup>34</sup> Hawley, pp. 282-284.

<sup>35</sup> *Idaho Daily Statesman*, January 27 and February 11, 1909.

<sup>36</sup> Hawley, pp. 283-284.

### Chapter Seven

<sup>1</sup> *Current-Journal*, March 21, 1907. The *Current-Journal* will be used almost exclusively for information on the mayoralty of Webster as the Teton Dam break of June 5, 1976, caused the destruction of the city hall records.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, March 21 and April 4, 1907.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, April 18, 1907.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, May 23, 1907.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, May 21, 1908.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, May 28, 1908.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, July 2, 1908, Supplement. *Rigby Star*, Rigby, Idaho, July 9, 1908, Supplement.

<sup>9</sup> *Current-Journal*, July 16, 1908.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, July 30, 1908.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, October 1, 1908.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, February 4, 11, and 18, 1909.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, March 1, April 10, 1909.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, April 22, 1909.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, May 20, 1909.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, July 1, 1909.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, July 15, 1909.



*Chapter Eight*

<sup>1</sup> *Commissioners Minutes*, Book 2, February 18, 1913-February 9, 1920, Madison County Courthouse, Rexburg, Idaho, November 10, 1916, pp. 292-294. Hereinafter cited as "Commissioners Minutes."

<sup>2</sup> *Current-Journal*, September 8, 1916.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, October 27, 1916.

<sup>4</sup> *Commissioners Minutes*, November 10, 1916, p. 294. *Current-Journal*, November 10, 1916.

<sup>5</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, January 11, 1917.

<sup>6</sup> *Commissioners Minutes*, January 8, 1917, p. 309.

<sup>7</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, January 11, 1917.

<sup>8</sup> *Commissioners Minutes*, January 10, 1917, p. 310.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, July 16, 1917, p. 347. *Rexburg Standard*, September 5, 1917.

<sup>10</sup> *Commissioners Minutes*, January 10, 1917, p. 311.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, April 28, 1917, p. 323. *Rexburg Standard*, June 21, 1917.

<sup>12</sup> *Commissioners Minutes*, April 10, 1917, p. 321.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, July 6, 1917, pp. 350-352.

<sup>14</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, December 6, 1917.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, March 20, 1918.

<sup>16</sup> *Commissioners Minutes*, April 8, 1918, p. 377.

<sup>17</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, June 21, 1917.

<sup>18</sup> *Commissioners Minutes*, May 18, 1918.

<sup>19</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, August 6, 1918.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, November 14, 1918.

<sup>21</sup> *Commissioners Minutes*, December 16, 1918, p. 422. *Rexburg Standard*, December 19, 1918.

<sup>22</sup> *Commissioners Minutes*, January 13, 1919, p. 429.

<sup>23</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, October 3, 1918.

*Chapter Nine*

<sup>1</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, June 21, July 26, and August 9, 1928.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, August 23, 1928.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, August 30, 1928.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, October 4, 1928.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, October 18, 1928.

<sup>6</sup> Herbert Hoover and Charles Curtis were the Republican candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States.

<sup>7</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, November 1, 1928.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, November 8, 1928.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, December 27, 1928.

<sup>11</sup> *Journal of the State Senate of the Idaho Legislature*, Twentieth Session, Published by Authority of the Secretary of State, 1929, p. 38.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 252, 461, 496.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 522.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 145, 222, and 496.

<sup>16</sup> *Idaho Daily Statesman*, Boise, Idaho, February 27, 1929.

<sup>17</sup> *Senate Journal*, Twentieth Session, pp. 222, 461, 497.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 159, 220, 461, 497.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173, 294, 461, 498.

<sup>20</sup> *Rexburg Journal*, March 15, 1929.

<sup>21</sup> *Journal of the Senate of the Extraordinary Session of the Twentieth Idaho Legislature*, 1930. Published by the Authority of the Secretary of State, 1930, pp. 1–47. *Rexburg Journal*, February 21, 1930. *Rexburg Standard*, March 6, 1930.

<sup>22</sup> *Rexburg Journal*, July 11, 1930.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, November 7, 1930.

### Chapter Ten

<sup>1</sup> Madison County Records, Rexburg, Idaho Courthouse, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, January, 1898, pp. 135–136; April 19, 1899, pp. 139–140; August 16, 1902, p. 23. Hereinafter cited as “MCR.”

<sup>2</sup> Kate B. Carter, ed., *Pioneer Irrigation: Upper Snake River Valley*, (Salt Lake City: Utah Printing Company, 1955), pp. 210–212. Also, Kate B. Carter, ed., *Our Pioneer Heritage*, Volume 12, (Salt Lake City: Utah Printing Company, 1969), pp. 546–547.

<sup>3</sup> MCR, *Deed Record*, December 24, 1903, pp. 43–44.

<sup>4</sup> MCR, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, No. 509 and No. 974, April 1, 1903, pp. 31–34.

<sup>5</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>6</sup> MCR, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, March 28, 1903, pp. 28–29.

<sup>7</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>8</sup> *Progressive Men of Idaho*, (Chicago: A. W. Bowen & Co., 1904), p. 458.

<sup>9</sup> Glen Barrett, *Small Town Banking in the Good Ol' Days*, (Boise: Boise State University Press, 1976), p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Glen Barrett, *Idaho Banking, 1863–1976*, (Boise: Boise State University Press, 1976), p. 188.

<sup>11</sup> *Sugar City Times*, Sugar City, Idaho, Christmas Edition, December, 1908.

<sup>12</sup> MCR, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, No. 7300, April 1, 1905, pp. 57–58; No. 13969, October 19, 1906, pp. 91–92; No. 13970, October 18, 1906, pp. 92–93.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 3709, January 15, 1915, pp. 207–208.

<sup>14</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, Prosperity Number, December, 1915.

<sup>15</sup> MCR, *Commissioners Minutes*, May 18, 1918, p. 388.

<sup>16</sup> Barrett, *Idaho Banking*, pp. 242, 254.

<sup>17</sup> MCR, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, No. 31829, April 21, 1910, p. 159.

<sup>18</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, March 10, 1910.

<sup>19</sup> *Current-Journal*, August 20, 1915.

<sup>20</sup> MCR, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, No. 15000, May 15, 1919, pp. 290–291.

<sup>21</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, January 3, 1936.

<sup>22</sup> MCR, *Articles of Incorporation*, Book 50, No. 32573, May 21, 1910, pp. 160–162.

<sup>23</sup> The records of these transactions are a matter of public record in the Madison County clerk's office, Rexburg, Idaho.

<sup>24</sup> MCR, *Miscellaneous Record*, No. 89724, August 3, 1949, pp. 460–463.

### Chapter Eleven

<sup>1</sup> Lola Webster Interview, January 19, 1978.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Alice Tout Interview, February 2, 1978.

<sup>6</sup> Lola Webster Material.

<sup>7</sup> *Rexburg Journal*, January 3, 1936.

<sup>8</sup> Lola Webster Interview.

<sup>9</sup> *Rexburg Journal*, January 3, 1936.

<sup>10</sup> Lola Webster Interview.



- <sup>11</sup> *Rexburg Journal*, January 3, 1936.
- <sup>12</sup> Lola Webster Interview.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>15</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, January 9, 1941.
- <sup>16</sup> Ruth Mae Blunk Interview, July 3, 1978.
- <sup>17</sup> Lola Webster Material.
- <sup>18</sup> Ruth Mae Blunk Interview.
- <sup>19</sup> Rexburg First Ward Historical Record, Historical Archives, L.D.S. Church, Salt Lake City, Utah. *Rexburg Journal*, January 9, 1941. *Salt Lake Tribune*, Salt Lake City, Utah, January 11, 1941, p. 31.
- <sup>20</sup> Marriner D. Morrell Interview, November 21, 1977.
- <sup>21</sup> *Rexburg Standard* January 16, 1941.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>23</sup> Marriner D. Morrell Interview.
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- <sup>25</sup> *Rexburg Standard*, January 16, 1941.
- <sup>26</sup> Marriner D. Morrell Interview.
- <sup>27</sup> *Journal of the State Senate of the Idaho Legislature, Twenty-Sixth Session*, Published by Authority of the Secretary of State, 1941, p. 182.
- <sup>28</sup> Lucille W. Howe Interview, February 6, 1978.
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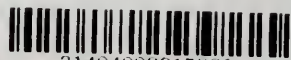
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